

SCOTT'S LORD OF THE ISLES

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND
VOCABULARY

BY

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PREFACE

WHATEVER our age may think of *The Lord of the Isles* as poetry, and however little interest we may be able to take in it as a romance, few would deny that it is of considerable educational value. Its vivid pictures impress on the memory an important crisis in our national history as no mere text-book could ever impress it.

This is due not only to Scott's vigorous verse, but also to his annotations, which in easy-flowing and attractive language supplement or illustrate many passages of the poem. Any edition, therefore, which is intended for thorough-going students should quote from Scott's notes everything but what is of merely antiquarian interest. To only adduce the bare facts contained in these notes (as is done in some editions) is to offer stones instead of bread.

Scott presupposes a fairly full acquaintance with the Scotch War of Independence, the events of which, though stated more or less curtly and discontinuously in most English histories, are not very easily disentangled and combined into an intelligible whole. I have therefore not only tried to fill up gaps in the continuity of Scott's annotations, but have also given a general outline of the period

Scott's original notes and a good many criticisms and remarks have been derived from the beautiful illustrated Reprint published by Messrs Black under Lockhart's editorship. For a few facts I am indebted to later editors, whose names are mentioned with, I trust, sufficient frequency, as well as to Black's *Guide*, Lockhart's *Memoirs*, Hutton's *Scott*, and some other books.

A certain amount of 'philology' seems nowadays to be regarded as indispensable for any profitable study of literature. This demand I have tried to satisfy by means of a Vocabulary—founded mainly on Prof Skeat's *Dictionary*—and have thus kept the literary and historical notes almost entirely free from tiresome discussions on grammar, orthography, and etymology.

H B C_

CLARENS, *March*, 1903

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INTRODUCTION

I BIOGRAPHICAL

THE student who needs a full account of Scott's life, personality, and literary activities will find in the 'Chandos Library' an abridged edition of the delightful *Memoirs* (which consist of ten volumes) by Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law. Another account, full enough probably for most readers and interspersed with interesting criticisms from a more modern point of view, is given by Mr. Hutton in a volume of *English Men of Letters*. Although any detailed 'Life' would be out of place in an edition of one of Scott's poems, the following short summary may prove useful.

'I was born,' says Scott, 'as I believe, on the 15th August, 1771, in a house belonging to my father at the head of the College Wynd (Edinburgh). It was pulled down to make room for the northern front of the New College.' He was the ninth of twelve children, of whom the first six died in early childhood. Of the six that survived there was only one sister, Anne,—'sickly and fanciful'—a fact worth noticing, for, as Mr. Hutton well says, 'Scott would have been all the better for a sister a little closer to him than Anne.' When a child of 18

months Scott had a teething fever, which resulted in a lameness of the right leg that proved incurable. He was sent for recovery to his grandfather's farm at Sandieknowe, in Roxburghshire, and grew up a healthy and athletic boy, though his gait was always afterwards marked by a limp. After passing through the High School and University of Edinburgh, he served six years in his father's office (who was a Writer to the Signet, i.e. solicitor), and was called to the bar at the age of twenty-one. But literature, not law, claimed his chief attention. He was not a precocious author. At an age when literary geniuses have often won their spurs he was still collecting material. And when he began, it was as translator, editor, and imitator. In 1796 appeared his translation of Burger's spectral poem *Leonore*, in 1799 that of Goethe's *Götz*, and in 1802 the collection of ballads, old and imitated, which is known as *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

One Sunday, says Mr Hutton, about two years before his call to the bar, Scott offered his umbrella to a young lady of much beauty who was coming out of the Greyfriars' Church during a shower. The umbrella was graciously accepted, the result being a passionate but unsuccessful attachment, the memory of which seems to have affected Scott deeply for many years. The lady having married another (afterwards, as Sir W Forbes, a true friend to Scott), the disappointed suitor, as so often happens, in all haste, within a few months, gave his hand, if not his heart, to the first who took his passing fancy. Mademoiselle Charpentier, or Miss Carpenter, daughter of a French refugee, seems to have been 'a lively beauty, probably of no great depth of character'.

INTRODUCTION (1)

The result of the marriage—of this ‘mating of a bird of paradise with an eagle’—is said to have been ‘happy on the whole’, but his wife was evidently not the source of much inspiration or comfort to Scott in his literary work and his financial anxieties.

As Sheriff of Selkirkshire he settled in 1804 at Ashestiel, in a side-valley of the Tweed. Here he wrote (1805) the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* (at the suggestion of Lady Dalkeith, afterwards Duchess of Buccleuch—for whom see note to vi 962) and *Marmion* (1808), and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810) and a part of *Rokeby* (1812). The rest of *Rokeby* and *The Lord of the Isles* (1814) were written at the ‘mountain farm,’ as he calls it, on the banks of the Tweed, which, after receiving the office of Clerk of Sessions, he had bought, and which in course of time grew to the stately mansion of Abbotsford.

In 1813 Scott had been offered the poet laureateship. This he refused, not caring to fetter himself with what were then the irksome obligations of that post. It was on his suggestion that Southey was chosen, and that the poet-laureate was allowed more freedom in the discharge of his official duties.

In 1814 he published anonymously *Waverley*, the first of his prose romances. Its immense success consoled him for the comparatively cold reception¹ that had been accorded to *The Lord of the Isles*, and showed him that, instead of vainly ‘striving against wind and tide,’ to use his own words, in the endeavour to rival the popularity of Byron as a writer of tales in verse, he had but to follow the new star that had risen in his sky and he could ‘not fail to gain a glorious port.’

¹ For this, see *Introd.*, p. xxviii.

Waverley was followed in rapid succession by *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe*, and his other well-known romances—twenty-three of them in fourteen years.

In 1820 Scott was made a baronet by George IV.

In 1826 a severe financial disaster, which had long threatened and which he had rendered still more formidable by his great expenditures and by forestalling his income, came upon him. The Edinburgh publisher Constable failed, and involved in his fall the printing house of Ballantyne & Co., in which Scott was a partner. His obligations amounted to about £130,000. His estate was partly sold and partly handed over to trustees for the benefit of the creditors. With a truly wonderful courage he faced the task of attempting to repay this gigantic sum. In the first two years he was able by means of his literary work to pay off £40,000, and nearly the same amount during the last three or four years of his life, in spite of failing health. The rest was supplied by the sale of his works after his death, so that the creditors finally received the whole of their money. In September, 1831, being much shattered by illness, he went to Italy in search of health, but, warned by an apoplectic attack, he hastened homewards and reached Abbotsford, where after two months he died, September 21, 1832. He was buried in Dryburgh Abbey.

II HISTORICAL SKETCH

The following sketch, drawn from various English and Scotch historians, gives some of the important facts that preceded and led up to the Scotch War of Independence, and a fairly full account of the period 1306-1314, a part of which is covered by the action of the poem. In the Notes further details will be found, as well as remarks on Scott's numerous divergencies from historical facts, or the sequence of facts.

During what the historian Robertson calls the first period of Scotch history, *i.e.* up to the death of Alexander III (1286), there had existed from very early times¹—claimed, though not always acknowledged—a kind of 'loose supremacy' of the English kings over Scotland. By the time of the Norman Conquest the English influence had become so strong in Scotland that the Scot kings were 'Englishmen in all but blood, and the marriage of Malcolm of Scotland with Margaret, sister of Edgar Aetheling, filled the Scotch court with English nobles, who had fled from the terrible Norman devastations of the north country. The children of Malcolm and Margaret were regarded, even by many in England, as the representatives of the old royal race and as the true claimants of the English throne. 'So formidable became the pretensions of the Scot kings that they forced the ablest of our Norman

¹ Probably from the age of the Northumbrian kingdom (600 700 A.D.), renewed when the Scot kings accepted Edward the Elder (924) as their 'father and lord' to aid them against the Danes.

sovereigns into a complete change of policy'. Instead of attempting to extort an illusory homage by invasions of Scotland, as had been done by his predecessor, Henry I, by his marriage with Matilda, daughter of Malcolm, not only deprived the Scotch line of its claims, but laid the foundation of the claims to 'overlordship' which were henceforth made by the new English dynasty.

As the marriage with Margaret had changed Malcolm from a Celtic chieftain into an English king, so that of Matilda converted her brother, King David I, into a Norman sovereign¹. 'His court was filled with Norman nobles from the south, such as the Balliols and Bruces, who were destined to play so great a part afterwards, but who now for the first time obtained fiefs in the Scottish realm.'

When William the Lion, King of Scots, was captured by Henry II he ransomed himself by acknowledging Henry as his suzerain. 'From this bondage, however, Scotland was soon freed by the wise prodigality of Richard I, who allowed her to repurchase the freedom she had forfeited, and from that time the difficulties of the older claim were prudently evaded by a legal compromise. The Scot King repeatedly did homage, but with a distinct protest that it was for lands which he held in fief *within the realm of England*, and the English King accepted the homage with a counter-protest that it was rendered to him as the overlord of the Scottish realm.'

¹He marched into England to support the claim of his niece Maud, Matilda's daughter, against the usurper Stephen, but was defeated at the Battle of the Standard (1138).

For nearly two hundred years the relations of the two countries had remained peaceful and friendly, when the death of Alexander III seemed destined to remove even the necessity of protests. He had (when a boy of ten) married Margaret, daughter of Henry III of England, and had left but a single grandchild, the daughter of the Norwegian King. After long negotiation, the Scotch Parliament proposed the marriage of their child queen with the son of Edward I. But the "Maid of Norway" died¹ at the Orkneys on her voyage to Scotland (1290). On her death thirteen claimants to the Scotch throne appeared. Of these only two had any real ~~claim~~, viz, John Balliol, Lord of Galloway, and Robert Bruce (the Elder), Lord of Annandale, who were descended from David, brother to William the Lion.² They consented to submit their claims to Edward I as their overlord. Edward allowed them each to choose 40 Scots, who with 24 English nobles were to decide the case. A proposal to divide the kingdom was rejected, and Balliol, who as descendant of the eldest daughter of David had incontestably the stronger claim, was elected king, and paid homage to Edward as his suzerain.

For a time all went smoothly, but difficulties soon arose about the right of appeal from the Scotch to the English Court. On this right Edward illegally insisted, and when he went still further and summoned Balliol to aid him against France, the Scot King, having procured a Papal absolution from his oath of fealty, entered into

¹ She was only in her eighth year.

² By marriage of the Norman nobles, Balliol and Bruce, with David's two daughters, Margaret and Isabel.

secret alliance with the French, refused to attend Edward's Parliament at Newcastle, and invested Carlisle. Hereupon (1296) Edward, having taken and destroyed Berwick, entered Scotland with a large army. Edinburgh, Stirling, and Perth opened their gates, Bruce joined the English army, and Balliol himself surrendered, and passed without a blow from his throne to an English prison¹. Scotland lapsed to its overlord, and its earls, barons, and gentry gave homage to Edward as their king. The sacred stone on which its older sovereigns had been installed, an oblong block of limestone, which legend asserted to have been the pillar of Jacob, was removed from Scone and placed in Westminster by the shrine of the Confessor. It was enclosed by Edward's order in a stately seat, which became from that time the coronation chair of English kings.

This first Conquest of Scotland by Edward I took place in 1296. In the next year the Scotch rose under Wallace, and Edward was forced to conquer Scotland for a second time, a task that took him eight years.

The disgraceful submission of their leaders had brought the Scotch people itself to the front. Amidst the despair of nobles and priests, William Wallace, an outlaw knight, called to arms the farmers and peasants, who had never consented to Edward's supremacy, and who willingly rose against the insolent rule of the

¹ It was at Dunbar (see vi 677) that Balliol was defeated. He was allowed to retire to Normandy, where he died in 1304. His son, Edward Balliol, afterwards (in Edward the Third's reign) for a short time supplanted David Bruce, Robert's son, as King of Scotland.

stranger. Having collected a large but untrained army, he cut to pieces the troops of the English Regent, Earl Warenne, at Cambuskenneth near Stirling, having attacked when half of them had crossed the Forth by a long and narrow bridge. All Scotland then rose against the English usurper, and Wallace constituted himself 'Guardian of the Realm' in Balliol's stead.

But in the next year Edward marched north with a large army. He was enabled by means of treachery to force Wallace to a battle near Falkirk. At first the Scotch pikemen, drawn up in *schilthums* (perhaps hollow circles) defied all the efforts of the English archers and cavalry, but they finally gave way. 'In a moment all was over, and the maddened knights rode in and out of the broken ranks, slaying without mercy. Thousands fell on the field, Wallace himself escaped with difficulty, followed by a handful of men.'

But even a defeat such as this left Scotland unconquered. The districts north of the Forth still held out, and the nobles elected John Comyn¹ as their regent, while Edward was for a time occupied by troubles with France.

In 1303 he again marched north. The Scotch nobles once more flung down their arms, and John Comyn surrendered and acknowledged his sovereignty. A

¹ Known as the 'Red Comyn'. He was the nephew of John Balliol. 'Bruce and Comyn were heads of two rival parties, whose animosity was excited by their mutual claims to the same crown, and whose interests were utterly irreconcilable' (Tytler). This animosity made Comyn write to King Edward and disclose the designs of Bruce—a treacherous act that, as we shall see, brought about his death.

general amnesty was proclaimed, but Wallace, perhaps doubtful of Edward's word, remained an outlaw and fugitive. He was at length (1305) captured, it is said by treachery, and condemned to death at Westminster for treason, sacrilege, and robbery. His head, crowned with laurel, was placed on London Bridge.

The conquest of Scotland was now deemed complete, and Edward was intending to assemble at Carlisle a joint Parliament of the two nations, when the conquered country suddenly rose again in arms under Robert Bruce, the grandson of the original claimant.

The events of the next eight years (seven of which are covered by the action of Scott's poem), from 1306 till the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, are related as follows by Green, whose account I shall supplement, and here and there modify, by a few facts from other sources.

'The Norman house of Bruce formed a part of the Yorkshire baronage, but it had acquired through intermarriages the Earldom of Carrick and the Lordship of Annandale¹. Both the (original) claimant and his son had been pretty steadily on the English side in the contest with Balliol and Wallace,² and (the young)

¹ When Edward gave his award in favour of Balliol, the elder Bruce gave up to his son, Earl of Carrick, his lands in Annandale, not wishing to hold them as a vassal to Balliol. In 1293 this Earl of Carrick resigned his title and lands to his son, Robert Bruce (Tytler). How Robert Bruce's father became Earl of Carrick is told on v. xix.

² See note on III. x. Fraser Tytler (*Hist. of Scotland*) says that Robert Bruce's father and brother fought at Falkirk on the English side, but that Bruce himself did not. (Lord Hailes in his *Annals* states that he *did*.)

Robert Bruce had been trained in the English Court, and stood high in the King's favour. But the withdrawal of Balliol gave a new force to his claims upon the crown, and the discovery of an intrigue that he had set on foot with the Bishop of St Andrews so roused Edward's jealousy that Bruce (who was at the English Court) fled for his life across the Border.¹ In the church of the Grey Friars at Dumfries he met Comyn, the Lord of Badenoch, to whose treachery he attributed the disclosure of his plans, and after the interchange of a few hot words struck him with his dagger to the ground.²

'It was an outrage that admitted of no forgiveness, and Bruce for very safety was forced to assume the crown, six weeks after, in the Abbey of Scone. The news raised Scotland again to arms,³ and summoned Edward to a new contest with his unconquerable foe

¹ Others (*e.g.* Wynton) assert that on account of Comyn's disclosures Edward sent for Bruce, and that on his arrival he was warned of the danger by Earl Gloucester, and escaped. On the Border he is said to have met and slain an emissary of Comyn, and to have thus obtained documents proving the latter's treachery.

² See note to 'Kirkpatrick's bloody duk,' II. xiii. The murder took place on Feb. 10th, 1306. Bruce was crowned on March 27th, and perhaps again, by the Countess of Buchan, sister to the Earl of Fife (who arrived late, and claimed the right of crowning the king as the prerogative of the Fife family), on the 29th. Her husband (a Comyn) is said to have tried to kill her for her treasonable act.

³ Tytler asserts that Bruce's following was at this time very small—a handful of brave men, comprising two earls (Lennox and Athol) and fourteen barons. The bishops of Glasgow and St. Andrews also supported him.

But the murder of Comyn had changed the King's mood to a terrible pitilessness, he threatened death against all concerned in the outrage, and exposed the Countess of Buchan,¹ who had set the crown on Bruce's head, in a cage or open chamber built for the purpose in one of the towers of Berwick. At the solemn feast which celebrated his son's knighthood, Edward vowed on the swan,² which formed the chief dish at the banquet, to devote the rest of his days to exact vengeance from the murderers.

'Even at the moment of the vow³ Bruce was already flying for his life to the Highlands. A small English force under Aymer de Valence (Earl of Pembroke) had sufficed to rout the disorderly levies which gathered round the new monarch, and the flight of Bruce left his followers at Edward's mercy. Noble after noble was hurried to the block. The wife and daughters of Bruce were flung into Edward's prisons.⁴ Bruce

¹ This was probably after Bruce's defeat at Methven. She was kept confined in this cage for four years, and then imprisoned in Berwick monastery.

² 'Two swans, ornamented with golden net work,' is the ordinary account. Our old friend Mrs Markham says 'two live swans, adorned with bells of gold.'

³ This seems inaccurate. Prince Edward was knighted at Pentecost, and the defeat at Methven (near Perth) took place, at the earliest, on June 19th, 1306. In the battle Bruce, it is said, was thrice unhorsed, and with a few followers escaped with great difficulty to the mountains.

⁴ See notes to II. xvi. 'In different prisons and castles they endured eight years' captivity'—i.e. till they were exchanged for English prisoners after Bannockburn. The Earl of Athol, Sir Simon Fraser, Sir Christopher Seton, and Bruce's brother Nigel, were some of the chief who were executed. Bruce's sisters,

himself offered to capitulate, but the offer only roused the old king to fury, and rising from his sick bed he led his army northwards to complete the conquest. But the hand of death was upon him, and in the very sight of Scotland the old man breathed his last at Burgh upon Sands.

The abandonment of his great enterprise by Edward II and the troubles that soon arose between him and his barons by no means restored the fortunes of Robert Bruce. The Earl of Pembroke was still master of the open country, and the Highland chiefs of the West,¹ among whom the new king was driven to seek for shelter, were bitterly hostile. For four years² Bruce's

Mary and Christina, were soon afterwards made prisoners. Mary was shut up in a cage at Roxburgh like the Countess of Buchan, and Christina was sent to a convent. Perhaps this fact may have suggested the character of Bruce's sister 'Isabel' in Scott's poem, of whom I can discover no trace in history. One sister, Marjorie, is said to have married Sir Nigel Campbell (11 212), and another was perhaps the wife of Sir Christopher Seton. Two other brothers of Bruce are said to have been captured (1307) at Loch Ryan, and to have been executed. His daughter Marjorie married 'the Stewart' (see Index).

¹ Especially the Lord of Lorn and the barons of Argyle. Bruce's great enemy, Allaster (Alexander) Mac Dougal, called Allaster of Argyle and Lord of Lorn, had married the daughter (says Wynton's *Chronicle*), or the aunt (says Hailes), of the Red Comyn, slain by Bruce. See note on 1 51.

² Green does not agree here with Barbour and others, who make 1307 the turning point in Bruce's fortunes. He omits all account of Bruce's flight to Ireland, and of the successful descent on Arran and the coast of Ayrshire, which form the action of the first five cantos of Scott's poem, and which took place in the early spring of 1307, i.e. before the death of Edward I in July. (See note to IV 78.) As will be seen from the notes, it is

career was that of a desperate adventurer. In the legends which clustered round his name we see him listening in Highland glens to the bay of the bloodhounds on his track, or holding single-handed a pass against a crowd of savage clansmen. Sometimes the little band of fugitives were forced to support themselves by hunting or fishing, sometimes to break up for safety as their enemies tracked them to their lair. Bruce himself had more than once to fling off his coat of mail and scramble barefoot for his very life up the crags.

‘Little by little, however, the dark sky cleared. The English pressure relaxed as the struggle between Edward II and the barons grew fiercer.

‘A terrible ferocity mingled with heroism in the work of freedom—Bruce’s “harrying of Buchan,” after his defeat of its earl, who had joined the English, at last fairly turned the tide of success.¹ Edinburgh, Roxburgh,

a fiction that Bruce was driven from Ruchrin up to Mull in a little ‘skiff’ with his brother and sister. He sent Sir James Douglas and Sir Robert Boyd in advance, and when they had got a footing in Ayrshire he followed ‘with 33 small row boats’ (says Barbour), and about 300 men. See v. xi. Before Edward I died the battle of Loudonhill (May, 1307) had been won by Bruce, and fortune had begun to turn in his favour. The bloodhound adventure happened still earlier. (See on II. xxviii.)

¹Green certainly does not give one the impression that this turn of the tide occurred, as it did occur, if not actually before, at least in the same year as the death of Edward I. It was in this year (1307)—the same year in which Bruce returned from Ruchrin, and made his descent on Ayrshire—or in the following spring, that he defeated at Old Meldrum (see note vi. 22), in Aberdeenshire, Comyn, the Earl of Buchan (husband, I presume, of the encaged countess), and devastated his territories.

Perth, and most of the Scotch fortresses fell one by one into the King's hands. The clergy met in council, and owned Bruce as their lawful lord. Gradually the Scotch barons who still held to the English cause were coerced into submission, and Bruce found himself strong enough to invest Stirling, the last and the most important of the Scotch fortresses which held out for Edward¹

Stirling was in fact the key of Scotland, and its danger roused England out of its civil strife to a vast effort for the recovery of its prey. Thirty thousand horsemen² formed the fighting part of the great army which followed Edward II to the North, and a host of wild marauders had been summoned from Ireland and Wales to its support.

'The army which Bruce had gathered to oppose the inroad was formed almost wholly of footmen, and was stationed to the south of Stirling, on a rising ground.

'Barbour informs us that for 50 years afterwards men spoke with terror of the *harrying of Buchan*, and it is singular that at this day the oaks which are turned up in the mosses bear upon their trunks the blackened marks of being scathed with fire' (Tytler)

¹Between the 'harrying of Buchan' and the investment of Stirling (1313) were about six years. During this time Edward II led, or sent, about five expeditions to Scotland, but as soon as the English withdrew again the two Bruces made descents into England, sacking towns and devastating the country as far as the Tees. These exploits are perhaps exaggerated by Scotch historians, but are totally ignored by Green.

²Scotch writers give 40,000 cavalry (3000 horse and man in armour) and 50,000 archers. Edward had from Lent to midsummer to relieve Stirling. See on VI 74

flanked by a little brook, the Bannock burn, which gave its name to the engagement¹ The King (Bruce), like Wallace, drew up his force in solid squares, or circles of spearmen The English were dispirited at the very outset by the failure of an attempt² to relieve Stirling, and by the issue of a single combat between Bruce and Henry de Bohun, a knight who had borne down upon him as he was riding peacefully along the front of his army Robert was mounted on a small hackney, and held only a light battle-axe in his hand, but, warding off his opponent's spear he cleft his skull with so terrible a blow that the handle of the axe was shattered in his grasp At the opening of the battle the English archers were thrown forward to rake the Scottish squares, but they were without support, and were easily dispersed by a handful of horse³ whom Bruce had held in reserve for the purpose The great body of men-at-arms next flung themselves on the Scottish front, but their charge was embarrassed by the narrow space along which the line was forced to move, and the steady resistance of the squares soon threw the knighthood into disorder In the moment of failure the sight of a body of

¹ For details as to the battle field, etc., see notes to VI x, seq

² This, and the death of Boune, or Bohun, took place on the evening preceding the battle, as related in VI xiv xviii The night was spent, according to Scotch historians, by the two armies much as the night before Agincourt, according to Shakespeare, was spent respectively by the French and English

³ Under Marshal Keith See note to VI 592. It is asserted by some historians that this was not at the opening of the battle See on VI 232

camp-followers,¹ whom they mistook for reinforcements to the enemy, spread panic through the English host. It broke in headlong rout. The thousands of brilliant horsemen were soon floundering in pits² which had guarded the level ground to Bruce's left, or riding in wild haste for the Border. Few however were fortunate enough to reach it.³ Edward himself, with a body of five hundred knights, succeeded in escaping to Dunbar and the sea. But the flower of his knighthood fell into the hands of the victor, while the Irishry⁴ and the footmen were ruthlessly cut down by the country folk as they fled. For centuries after the rich plunder of the English camp left its traces on the treasure and vestment rolls of castle and abbey.

¹ See on VI 800. The way in which Scott has here 'grafted a romantic story on an historical event,' and has attributed, to no small degree, the victory of Bannockburn to his heroine, may cause a smile, but is really very ingenious. The Maid of Lorn at the head of the Gillies is by no means such an extravagant fiction as Schiller's Maid of Orleans busting her chains, routing whole armies single handed, and falling slain on the battlefield.

² See on VI 646.

³ 'Thirty thousand of the English were left dead upon the field. multitudes were drowned when attempting to cross the river Forth. and the Bannockburn was so completely heaped up with dead bodies of men and horses, that men might pass dry over the mass, as if it were a bridge' (Tytler).

⁴ Also a large body of Welsh, under Sir Maurice Berkeley (vi 669) was annihilated before it reached the Border.

III SCOTT AS POET

'I am sensible,' says Scott - 'that if there be anything good about my poetry, or prose either, it is a kind of hurried frankness of composition which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition'

But it is not only the young and the uncritical that find something good in Scott's poetry. It is true that, in spite of many passages of rare beauty and vigour, these 'tales in verse' seem on the whole to be so totally different from what one generally regards as poetry,¹ that the literary critic is perplexed, like 'the Midianite of old,' he feels sorely tempted to curse, but nevertheless finds himself unwittingly uttering blessings. It is true that one is not seldom taken aback by the sometimes really astounding banality and 'clap trappery,' as it has been called, of both language and sentiment, but one recovers wonderfully quickly from the shock, and finds oneself ever again, as it were, led gently on by the affections, and even by a kind of admiration.

What is it that thus attracts us, and enables us to pass by so lightly much that in the case of many other writers would probably make us fling the book aside as unworthy of perusal, or even criticism? What is it that constrains us not only to condone, but to love and admire? I do not think that it is the story, though

¹ The difference between Scott's outlook and that of most of his critics, and even of many of his warmest admirers, is shown by the fact that for him the *Divina Commedia* was, 'uninteresting,' and his friend Joanna Baillie a greater poet than Byron or Wordsworth.

doubtless it was the story that, in an age before the modern novel, was the main cause of the great popularity of these and similar tales in verse. Nor is it the charm of a strong imagination such as Milton's, nor of poetic insight into the 'life of things,' such as Wordsworth's, for of such charm there is no trace in Scott. Nor again are most readers nowadays, any more than critics such as Mr Ruskin, attracted to these poems by what he calls 'Scott's fond and purposeless dreaming over the past,' and 'his endeavours to revive the past, not in reality, but on the stage of fiction.' Such things have lost much of their attractive power. But, if it is not due to these causes, to what is it due?

Probably Mr Ruskin intimates rightly one cause of the indefinable charm exercised by these poems when he says that Scott's work is excellent 'precisely in proportion to the degree in which it is sketched from present nature.' But this is by no means a full explanation.

However, it will be better, instead of endeavouring to supplement Mr Ruskin's assertion with my own theories, to offer an assortment of opinions on the subject of Scott's poetry in general, and the *Lord of the Isles* in particular, merely premising that the best judge of the real value of Scott's poetry is probably, after all, not the professional literary critic.

'Never, we think, has the analogy between poetry and painting been more strikingly exemplified than in the writings of Mr Scott. He sees everything with a painter's eye. It is because Mr Scott usually delineates those objects with which he is perfectly familiar, that his touch is so easy, correct and animated

They are not the imperfect sketches of a hurried traveller, but the finished studies of a resident artist, deliberately drawn from different points of view, each has its true shape and position. The figures are painted with the same fidelity. Like those of Salvator Rosa, they are perfectly appropriate to the spot on which they stand. The boldness of feature, the wildness of air, and the careless ease of these mountaineers are as congenial to their native Highlands as the birch and the pine which darken their glens, the sedge which fringes their lakes, or the heath which waves over their moors' (*Quarterly Review*, 1810)

'The great secret of his popularity, and the leading characteristic of his poetry, appear to us to consist evidently in this, that he has made more use of common topics, images, and expressions, than any original poet of later times. In the choice of his subjects, for example, he does not attempt to interest merely by fine observation or pathetic sentiment, but takes the assistance of a story, and enlists the reader's curiosity among his motives for attention. Then his characters are all selected from the most common *dramatis personæ* of poetry: kings, warriors, knights, outlaws, nuns, minstrels, secluded damsels, wizards, true lovers.

Writing for the world at large, he has wisely abstained from attempting to raise any passion to a height to which worldly people could not be transported,¹ and has contented himself with giving his readers the chance of feeling as a brave, kind, and affectionate gentleman must often feel in the ordinary course of his existence,

¹The still greater popularity of Byron's poetry seems to nullify this argument.

without trying to breathe into him either that lofty enthusiasm which disdains the ordinary business and amusements of life, or that quiet and deep sensibility which unfits for most of its pursuits. With regard to diction and imagery, too, it is quite obvious that Mr Scott has not aimed at writing in a very pure, or a very consistent style. He seems to be anxious only to strike, and to be easily and universally understood.

Indifferent whether he coins or borrows, and drawing with equal freedom on his memory and his imagination, he goes boldly forward, in full reliance on a never-failing abundance, and dazzles with his richness and variety even those who are most apt to be offended with his glare and irregularity' (Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1810)

In his account of Scott (*English Men of Letters*) Mr Hutton says that the popularity of these poems was due to their 'high romantic glow and their extraordinary romantic simplicity'. 'His lines,' he says, 'are always strongly drawn, his handling is always simple, and his subject always romantic. His romance is like his native scenery—bold, bare, and rugged, with a swift deep stream of strong pure feeling running through it. There is plenty of colour in his pictures, as there is on the Scotch hills when the heather is out. And so, too, there is plenty of intensity in his romantic situations, but it is the intensity of simple, natural, unsophisticated, hardy, and manly characters. As for subtleties and fine shades of feeling, or anything like the manifold harmonies of the richer arts, they are not to be found.'

'No very subtle powers of criticism,' says Mr

Macmillan (in his edition of *Marmion*), 'are required to arrive at a correct estimate of Scott's poetical works. The merits and defects of his poetry are so obvious that they force themselves upon the attention of the most careless reader. In his long poems he is extremely careless, as he himself acknowledges in the third introductory epistle of *Marmion*. Even in his finest passages we now and then meet an inappropriate word or idea recklessly dragged in for the sake of rhyme or metre. In all his poems there are long bald passages of versified prose, which are intended to serve as connecting links between brilliant descriptions.'

According to Mr Macmillan, the greatness of Scott's poems consists in their descriptions of nature, and their pictures of battle and hunting scenes. 'As war poet,' he says, 'Scott rises to the very highest rank. To find poetical battles equal to Scott's descriptions of Flodden and Bannockburn, we must go back three thousand years to the time of the composition of the *Iliad*.' This opinion is also expressed by the editor of Chambers' Reprints of Scott's poems, who says 'The power of adequately describing the fire and speed of battle seems almost to belong alone to Homer and Sir Walter Scott.'

As a word-painter of scenery Scott is highly praised by Ruskin. 'In his love of beauty observe that the love of colour is a leading element, his healthy mind being incapable of losing, under any modern false teaching, its joy in the brilliancy of hue. For instance, if he has a sea-storm to paint in a single line, he does not, as a feebler poet would probably have done, use any expression about the temper or form of the waves, does not call them angry or mountainous

He is content to strike them out with two dashes of Tintoret's favourite colours

The blackening wave is edged with white,
To inch and rock the sea mews fly'

As regards the liberties that Scott took with grammar and syntax, much indignation was naturally felt by the self-constituted keepers of the King's English. The following is rather an amusing specimen of such a critic's perplexity—of mingled cursing and blessing

'A happy mixture of moral remark and vivid painting frequently occurs, and is as frequently debased by prosaic expressions and couplets, and by every variety of ungrammatical license, or even barbarism. Descriptions calculated at once to exalt and animate the readers' thoughts, and to lower and deaden the language which is their vehicle. But, as we have before observed again and again, Mr Scott is inaccessible even to the mildest and the most just reproof on this subject. We really believe that he *cannot* write correct English, and we therefore dismiss him as an *incurable*, with unfeigned compassion for this one fault, and with the highest admiration of his many redeeming virtues' (*Monthly Review*, 1815)

The comments made on the *Lord of the Isles* at its first appearance by the chief literary critics of the day are interesting. I subjoin a few specimens. Others will be found here and there in the Notes. The *Edinburgh Review* (Mr; afterwards Lord, Jeffrey) received the poem thus

'Here is another genuine lay of the great Minstrel, with all his characteristic faults, beauties, and

irregularities The same glow of colouring, the same energy of narration, the same amplitude of description, are conspicuous here, which distinguish all his other productions—the same characteristic disdain of puny graces and small originalities,—the true poetical hardihood, in the strength of which he urges on his Pegasus fearlessly through dense and rare—avails himself without scruple of common sentiments and common images wherever they seem fitted for his purpose—and is original by the very boldness of his borrowing, and impressive by his disregard of epigram and emphasis

His faults are nearly as notorious as his beauties There are innumerable harsh lines and uncouth expressions, passages of a coarse and heavy diction, and details of uninteresting minuteness and oppressive explanation

It is needless to recite the many heavy pages which contain the colloquies of Isabel and Edith, and set forth the unintelligible reasons of their unreasonable conduct The concerns of these two young ladies indeed form the heaviest part of the poem The mawkish generosity of the one, and the piteous fidelity of the other, are equally oppressive to the reader, and do not tend at all to put him in good humour with Lord Ronald, who, though the beloved of both, and the nominal hero of the work, is certainly as far as possible from an interesting person

He breaks the troth he had pledged to the heiress of Lorn as soon as he sees a chance of succeeding with the King's sister, and comes back to the slighted bride when his royal mistress takes the vows in a convent, and the heiress gets into possession of her lands by the forfeiture of her brother'

The *Monthly Review* thus criticised the title of the poem

'The Lord of the Isles himself, *selon les règles* of Mr Scott's composition, being the hero, is *not* the first person in the poem¹ Still, among the *second-best* of the author Lord Ronald holds a respectable rank indeed, hating his intended marriage with one woman while he loves another, he is a very noble fellow, and were he not so totally eclipsed by the Bruce he would have served very well to give a title to any octosyllabic epic, even were it as vigorous and poetical as the present Nevertheless, it would have been just as proper to call Virgil's divine poem *The Anchiseid*, as it is to call this *The Lord of the Isles*'²

The *British Critic* said 'No poem of Mr Scott has yet appeared with fairer claims on the public attention If it has less pathos than *The Lady of the Lake*, or less display of character than *Marmion*, it surpasses both in grandeur of conception and dignity of versification It is in every respect decidedly superior to *Rokeby*, and though it may not reach *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* in a few splendid passages, it is far more perfect as a whole Could Mr Scott but *endow his purposes with words*—could he but decorate the justice and the

¹ He is, of course, the first person in the poem regarded as a *romance* The question is whether, as another reviewer remarks, Scott does wrong to use the history of Bruce and the battle of Bannockburn as a mere background for a romance, and a romance of which the hero is contemptible as a lover, and the heroine weak enough to admire him

² Jeffrey says 'The title *The Lord of the Isles* has been adopted, we presume, to match that of *The Lady of the Lake*, but there is no analogy in the stories'

splendour of his conceptions with more unalloyed aptness of expression, and more uniform strength and harmony of numbers, he would claim a place in the highest rank among the poets of natural feeling and natural imagery.

The *Quarterly Review*, while allowing that the poem contains many beautiful passages, says 'We conceive that the whole poem, considering it as a narrative poem, is projected upon wrong principles'.¹ The story is obviously composed of two independent plots connected with each other merely by the accidental circumstances of time and place. The liberation of Scotland by Bruce has not naturally any more connexion with the loves of Ronald and the Maid of Lorn than with those of Dido and Aeneas. Had Mr Scott introduced these loves as an episode of an epic poem upon the subject of the battle of Bannockburn, its want of connexion with the main action might have been excused in favour of its intrinsic merit, but by a great singularity of judgment he has introduced the battle of Bannockburn as an episode in the loves of Ronald and the Maid of Lorn. To say nothing of the obvious preposterousness of such a design, the effect of it has, we think, decidedly been to destroy that interest which either of them might separately have created. If any interest remain respecting the fate of the ill-requited Edith it is because at no moment of the poem do we feel the slightest degree of interest respecting the enterprise of Bruce.

¹ The editor of Chambers' Reprints is of a different opinion. 'The plot is a fine instance of Scott's rare power of harmoniously grafting a romantic story upon a series of actual historical events.'

In reference to the criticisms which the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* reviewers made with 'such an exact coincidence of judgment,' Lockhart, Scott's biographer, wrote 'The defects which both point out are, I presume, only too completely explained by the rapidity with which this, the list of those great performances, had been thrown off, nor do I see that either reviewer has failed to do sufficient justice to the beauties which redeem the imperfections of *The Lord of the Isles*, except as regards the whole character of Bruce, its real hero, and the picture of Bannockburn, which does not appear to me in the slightest particular inferior to the Flodden of *Marmion*.'²

And the nature not only of the defects but also of the more striking and characteristic beauties of *The Lord of the Isles* is explainable by the circumstances of its composition, for critics were, and still are, pretty unanimous in pointing out (what is probably felt, though not formulated, by uncritical readers) that the peculiar charm of the poem lies not so much in its battle scenes as in its descriptions of wild natural scenery, and especially in its sea-pieces, and there were circumstances which account not only for what the *Quarterly Review* called 'violations of propriety both in language and in the composition of the story,' due to the want of a common degree of labour and meditation,' but which also account for the special character of the scenes described.

'Mr Scott, we observed in the newspapers,' writes Joffey in 1815, 'was engaged during last summer in a maritime expedition, and accordingly the most striking novelty in the present poem is the extent and variety of the sea-pieces with which it abounds.'

This 'maritime expedition' was a voyage made in the summer¹ of 1814 with the Lighthouse Commissioners, who were on then tour of inspection round the Scotch coasts. By July Scott had published *Waverley*, and had (as Lockhart tells us) already probably 'committed a part of Canto I of his poem to writing in a rough form'. In the Introduction, written in 1830 and prefixed to the edition of 1833 (after his death), Scott speaks as follows of this 'pleasure-voyage,' and gives other interesting facts and feelings connected with *The Lord of the Isles*. 'I could hardly have chosen a subject more popular in Scotland than anything connected with Bruce's history, unless I had attempted that of Wallace². But I am decidedly of opinion that a popular, or what is called a *taking* title, though well qualified to ensure the publishers against loss and to clear their shelves of the original impression, is rather apt to be hazardous than otherwise to the reputation of the author. He who attempts a subject of distinguished popularity has not the privilege of awakening the enthusiasm of his audience, on the contrary, it is already awakened, and glows, it may be, more ardently than that of the author himself. The sense of this risk, joined to

¹ In 1810 he had visited the Western Isles,^a and it was then that his enthusiasm was first aroused for the wild scenery of those parts. It was, I think, the experiences of this earlier voyage that Scott gave in his notes to Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*.

² Among a certain class of his fellow countrymen he had given offence by his former choice of Flodden Field as a subject. I find no allusion to the fact, but it is one that could not but have had some influence, that 1814 was the 5th centenary of Bannockburn.

the consciousness of striving against wind and tide,¹ made the task of composing the proposed poem somewhat heavy and hopeless, but, like the prize-fighter in *As You Like It*, I was to wrestle for my reputation, and not neglect my advantage

'In a most agreeable pleasure-voyage, which I have tried to commemorate² in the Introduction to the new edition of *The Pirate*, I visited in social and friendly company the coasts and islands of Scotland, and made myself acquainted with the localities of which I meant to treat

'But this voyage, which was in every other effect so delightful, was in its conclusion saddened by one of those strokes of fate which so often mingle themselves with our pleasures. The accomplished and excellent person³ who had recommended to me the subject for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, and to whom I proposed to inscribe what I already suspected might be the close of my poetical labours, was unexpectedly removed from

¹ Referring probably not to the fact that (as Mr. Hutton says) 'all through 1813 and 1814 Scott was kept in constant suspense and fear of bankruptcy by the ill success of John Ballantyne & Co.,' but to the fact that he had now realised that he had been ousted by Byron from the position of first poetical favourite, and that (to quote his own words) since one line had failed, he must just stick to another

² Scott's diary of this voyage, from Leith to the Orkneys, Hebrides, Arran, and Glasgow, is printed in Lockhart's *Memories of Scott*, Vol. III. Its contents are to a great extent reproduced in his notes to our poem

³ Harriet, Duchess of Buccleuch, died Aug. 24, 1814. See note to the concluding stanzas of the poem. Scott received the intelligence while visiting Loch Foyle and the Giant's Causeway, four days before his return to Glasgow (Sept. 8)

To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
 On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
 And moralize on mortal joy and pain?—

O ! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel strain

No ! do not scorn, although its hoarse note
 Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
 Though faint its beauties as the tints remote 30
 That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky,
 And few as leaves that tremble, sea and dry,
 When wild November hath his bugle wound ,
 Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
 Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
 Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
 To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day ,
 In distant lands, by the rough West reprov'd,
 Still live some relics of the ancient lay 40
 For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
 With such the Seer of Skye the eve beguiles ,
 'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
 In Harries known, and in Iona's piles,
 Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles

I

"WAKE, Maid of Lorn !" the Minstrels sung —
 Thy rugged halls, Aitornish ! rung,
 And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
 Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
 As 'mid the tuneful chon to keep 50
 The diapason of the Deep
 Lull'd were the winds on Inninmore,
 And green Loch Alline's woodland shore,
 As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
 In listing to the lovely measure
 And ne'er to symphony more sweet

Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
 Since, met from mainland and from isle,
 Ross, Arrian, Ilay, and Argyle,
 Each minstrel's tributary lay 60
 Paid homage to the festal day
 Dull and dishonour'd were the bard,
 Worthless of guerdon and regard,
 Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
 O! lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
 Who on that morn's irresistible call
 Were silent in Artornish hall

II

"Wake, Maid of Lorn!"—'twas thus they sung,
 And yet more proud the descant rung,
 "Wake, Maid of Lorn! high night is ours, 70
 To charm dull sleep from Beauty's bowers,
 Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so shy
 But owns the power of minstrelsy
 In Lettermore the timid deer
 Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear,
 Rude Heiskar's seal through surges dark
 Will long pursue the minstrel's bark,
 To list his notes, the eagle proud
 Will poise him on Ben-Caillach's cloud,
 Then let not Maiden's ear disdain 80
 The summons of the minstrel train,
 But, while our naps wild music make,
 Edith of Lorn, awake, awake!"

III

"O wake, while Dawn, with dewy shine,
 Wakes Nature's charms to vie with thine!
 She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
 To mate thy melody of voice,
 The dew that on the violet lies

Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes ,
 But, Edith, wake, and all we see 90
 Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee '—
 "She comes not yet," grey Feriand cried ,
 "Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
 Those notes prolong'd, that soothing theme,
 Which best may mix with Beauty's dream,
 And whisper, with their silvery tone,
 The hope she loves, yet fears to own"
 He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
 The strains of flattery and of pride ,
 More soft, more low, more tender fell 100
 The lay of love he bade them tell

IV

"Wake, Maid of Lorn ! the moments fly,
 Which yet that maiden-name allow ,
 Wake, Maiden, wake ! the hour is nigh,
 When love shall claim a plighted vow
 By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
 By Hope, that soon shall fears remove,
 We bid thee break the bonds of rest,
 And wake thee at the call of Love !
 Wake, Edith, wake ! in yonder bay 110
 Lies many a galley gaily mann'd,
 We hear the merry pibrochs play,
 We see the streamers' silken band
 What Chieftain's praise these pibrochs swell,
 What crest is on these banners wove,
 The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell—
 The riddle must be read by Love "

V

Retired her maiden train among,
 Edith of Lorn received the song,
 But tamed the minstrel's pride had been 120
 That had her cold demeanour seen ,

For not upon her cheek awoke
The glow of pride when Flattery spoke,
Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
One sigh responsive to the sting
As vainly had her maidens vied
In skill to deck the princely bride
Her locks, in dark-brown length array'd,
Cathleen of Ulne, 'twas thine to braid ,
Young Eva with meet reverence drew 130
On the light foot the silken shoe,
While on the ankle's slender round
Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound,
That, bleach'd Lochryan's depths within,
Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin
But Eimon, of experience old,
Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
In many an artful plait she tied,
To show the form it seem'd to hide,
Till on the floor descending roll'd 140
Its waves of crimson blent with gold

VI

O ! lives there now so cold a maid,
Who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,
In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
And conquest won—the bridal hour—
With every charm that wins the heart,
By Nature given, enhanced by Art,
Could yet the fair reflection view,
In the bright mirror pictured true,
And not one dimple on her cheek 150
A tell-tale consciousness bespeak ?—
Lives still such maid ?—Fair damsels, say,
For further vouches not my lay,
Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
When Loyn's bright Edith scorn'd to smile

VII

But Morag, to whose fostering care
 Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
 Morag, who saw a mother's aid
 By all a daughter's love repaid,
 (Strict was that bond—most kind of all— 160
 Inviolat in Highland hall)—
 Grey Morag sate a space apart,
 In Edith's eyes to read her heart
 In vain the attendants' fond appeal
 To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal,
 She mark'd her child receive their care,
 Cold as the image sculptured fair,
 (Form of some sainted patroness,)
 Which cloister'd maids combine to dress,
 She mark'd—and knew her nursing's heart 170
 In the vain pomp took little part
 Wistful a while she gazed—then press'd
 The maiden to her anxious breast
 In finish'd loveliness—and led
 To where a turret's any head,
 Slender and steep, and battled round,
 O'erlook'd, dark Mull ' thy mighty Sound,
 Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
 Part thy swath hills from Morven's shore

VIII

"Daughter," she said, "these seas behold, 180
 Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
 From Hut, that hears their northern roar,
 To the green Ilay's fertile shore,
 Or mainland turn, where many a tower
 Owns thy bold brother's feudal power,
 Each on its own dark cape reclined,

From where Mingany, steinly placed,
 O'erawes the woodland and the waste,
 To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
 Of Connal with his rocks engaging 190
 Think'st thou, amid this ample round,
 A single blow but thine has frown'd,
 To sadden this auspicious morn,
 That bids the daughter of high Lorn
 Impledge her spousal faith to wed
 The heir of mighty Somerled ?
 Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
 The fair, the valiant, and the young,
 LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty name 200
 A thousand bards have given to fame,
 The mate of monarchs, and allied
 On equal terms with England's pride —
 From Chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
 Who hears the tale, and triumphs not ?
 The damsel dons her best attire,
 The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
 Joy ! joy ! each warder's horn hath sung,
 Joy ! joy ! each matin bell hath rung ,
 The holy priest says grateful mass, 210
 Loud shouts each hardy galla glass,
 No mountain den holds outcast booi
 Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
 But he hath flung his task aside,
 And claim'd this morn for holy-tide ,
 Yet, empress of this joyful day,
 Edith is sad while all are gay "—

IX

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
 Resentment check'd the struggling sigh
 Her hurrying hand indignant dried 220
 The burning tears of injured pride—

"Morag, forbear ! or lend thy praise
 To swell yon hireling harpers' lays ,
 Make to yon maids thy boast of power,
 That they may waste a wondering hour,
 Telling of banners proudly borne,
 Of pealing bell and bugle horn,
 Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
 Crownlets and gauds of idle device
 But thou, experienced as thou art, 230
 Think'st thou with these to cheat the heart,
 That, bound in strong affection's chain,
 Looks for return and looks in vain ?
 No ! sum thine Edith's wretched lot
 In these brief words—He loves her not !

x

"Debate it not—too long I strove
 To call his cold observance love,
 All blinded by the league that styled
 Edith of Lorn,—while yet a child,
 She tripp'd the heath by Morag's side,— 240
 The brave Lord Ronald's destined bride
 Ere yet I saw him, while afar
 His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war,
 Tru'd to believe our fates the same,
 My bosom throbb'd when Ronald's name
 Came gracing Fame's heroic tale,
 Like perfume on the summer gale
 What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
 Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold ,
 Who touch'd the harp to heroes' praise, 250
 But his achievements swell'd the lays ?
 Even Morag—not a tale of fame
 Was hers but closed with Ronald's name
 He came ! and all that had been told
 Of his high worth seem'd poor and cold,

Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me !

XI

“Since then, what thought had Edith’s heart
And gave not plighted love its part !—
And what requital ? cold delay— 260
Excuse that shunn’d the spousal day —
It dawns, and Ronald is not here !—
Hunts he Bontalla’s nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear, that though he may not scorn
A daughter of the House of Lorn,
Yet, when these formal rites are o’er,
Again they meet, to part no more ?”

XII

—“Hush, daughter, hush ! thy doubts remove, 270
More nobly think of Ronald’s love
Look, where beneath the castle gray
His fleet unmooed from Aios bay !
See’st not each galley’s topmast bend,
As on the yards the sails ascend ?
Hiding the dark-blue land they rise,
Like the white clouds on April skies ,
The shouting vassals man the oars,
Behind them sink Mull’s mountain shores,
Onward then merry course they keep, 280
Through whistling breeze and foaming deep
And mark the headmost, seaward cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her mast
As if she veil’d its banner’d pride,
To greet afar her Prince’s bride !
Thy Ronald comes, and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,

He chides her sloth '—Fan Edith sigh'd,
Blush'd, sadly smiled, and thus replied —

XIII

“Sweet thought, but vain '—No, Moirag ' mark, 290
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
To win its way against the gale
Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
Have view'd by fits the course she tries,
Now, though the darkening scud comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind 300
They strive her shivering sail to bind,
Still nearer to the shelves' dread verge
At every tack her course they urge,
As if they fear'd Attornish more
Than adverse winds and breakers' roar ”

XIV

Sooth spoke the Maid —Amid the tide
The skiff she mark'd lay tossing sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to shore
Yet on her destined course no more 310
She gain'd, of forward way,
Than what a minstrel may compare
To the poor meed which peasants share,
Who toil the livelong day,
And such the risk her pilot braves,
That oft, before she wore,
Her boltsprit kiss'd the broken waves,
Where in white foam the ocean raves
Upon the shelving shore

Yet, to their destined purpose t^he,
 Undaunted toild her hardy crew,
 Nor look'd where shelter lay,
 Nor for Aitornish Castle drew,
 Nor steer'd for Aios bay

xv

Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
 Borne onward by the willing breeze,
 Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
 Streamer'd with silk, and tick'd with gold,
 Mann'd with the noble and the bold
 Of island chivalry 330
 Around their prows the ocean roars,
 And chafes beneath their thousand oars,
 Yet bears them on their way
 So chafes the war-horse in his might,
 That fieldward bears some valiant knight,
 Champs, till both bit and boss are white,
 But, foaming, must obey
 On each gay deck they might behold
 Lances of steel and crests of gold,
 And haubeaks with their burnish'd fold, 340
 That shimmer'd fair and free,
 And each proud galley, as she pass'd,
 To the wild cadence of the blast
 Gave wilder minstrelsy
 Full many a shrill triumphant note
 Saline and Scallastle bade float
 Their misty shores around,
 And Morven's echoes answer'd well,
 And Duart heard the distant swell
 Come down the darksome Sound 350

xvi

So bore they on with mirth and pride,
 And if that labouring bark they spied,

'Twas with such idle eye
 As nobles cast on lowly boor,
 When, toiling in his task obscure,
 They pass him careless by
 Let them sweep on with heedless eyes !
 But, had they known what mighty prize
 In that frail vessel lay,
 The famish'd wolf, that prowls the wold, 360
 Had scatheless pass'd the unguarded fold,
 Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
 Unchallenged were her way !
 And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,
 With mirth, and pride, and minstrel tone !
 But hadst thou known who sail'd so nigh,
 Far other glance were in thine eye !
 Far other flush were on thy brow,
 That, shaded by the bonnet, now
 Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer 370
 Of bridegroom when the bride is near !

XVII

Yes, sweep they on !—We will not leave,
 For them that triumph, those who grieve
 With that armada gay
 Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
 And bards to cheer the wassail rout,
 With tale, romance, and lay ,
 And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
 Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
 May stupify and stun its smart, 380
 For one loud busy day
 Yes, sweep they on !—But with that skiff
 Abides the minstrel tale,
 Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
 Labour that strain'd each sinew stiff,
 And one sad Maiden's wail

XVIII

All day with fruitless strife they toil'd,
 With eve, the ebbing currents boil'd
 More fierce from strait and lake,
 And midway through the channel met 390
 Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
 And high their mingled billows jet,
 As spears, that, in the battle set,
 Spring upward as they break
 Then, too, the lights of eve were past,
 And louder sung the western blast
 On rocks of Inninmore,
 Rent was the sail, and strain'd the mast,
 And many a leak was gaping fast,
 And the pale steersman stood aghast, 400
 And gave the conflict o'er

XIX

'Twas then that One, whose lofty look
 Not labour dull'd nor terror shook,
 Thus to the Leader spoke —
 "Brother, how hopest thou to abide
 The fury of this wilder'd tide,
 Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
 Until the day has broke?
 Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
 With quivering planks, and groaning keel, 410
 At the last billow's shock?
 Yet how of better counsel tell,
 Though here thou see'st poor Isabel
 Half dead with want and fear
 For look on sea, or look on land,
 Or yon dark sky, on every hand
 Despair and death are near
 For her alone I grieve—on me

Danger sit light, by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt , 420
 Either to bide the tempest's lour,
 Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
 Or rush amid heir naval power,
 With war-cry wake then wassail-hour,
 And die with hand on hilt"—

XX

That elder Leader's calm reply
 In steady voice was given,
 "In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven
 Edward, trim thou the shatter'd sail, 430
 The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven ,
 So shall we 'scape the western bay,
 The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
 So safely hold our vessels way
 Beneath the Castle wall ,
 For if a hope of safety rest,
 'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
 Who seeks for shelter, storm-distress'd,
 Within a chieftain's hall 440
 If not—it best beseems our worth,
 Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
 By noble hands to fall "

XXI

The helm, to his strong aim consign'd,
 Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
 And on her alter'd way,
 Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship,
 Like greyhound starting from the slip
 To seize his flying prey
 Awaked before the rushing prow, 450

The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave,
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
A gloomy splendour gave,
It seems as if old Ocean shakes
From his dark brow the lucid flakes 460
In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor-light that streaks
Grim Hecla's midnight sky

XXII

Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darken'd deep,—
Arctonish, on her frowning steep
'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
And landward far, and far to sea,
Her festal radiance flung 470
By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd,
Whose lustre mingled well
With the pale beam that now appear'd,
As the cold moon her head uprear'd
Above the eastern fell

XXIII

Thus guided, on their course they bore,
Until they near'd the mainland shore,
When frequent on the hollow blast
Wild shouts of merriment were cast,
And wind and wave and sea birds' cry 480
With wassail sounds in concert vie,
Like funeral shrieks with revelry,

Or like the battle-shout
 By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
 When Triumph, Rage, and Agony,
 Madden the fight and rout
 Now nearer yet, through mist and storm
 Dimly arose the castle's form,
 And deepen'd shadow made,
 Far lengthen'd on the main below,
 Where, dancing in reflected glow,
 A hundred torches play'd,
 Spangling the wave with lights as vain
 As pleasures in this vale of pain,
 That dazzle as they fade

490

XXIV

Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee
 They staid their course in quiet sea
 Hewn in the rock, a passage there
 Sought the dark fortress by a stair,
 So staid, so high, so steep,
 With peasant's staff one valiant hand
 Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,
 'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear and brand,
 And plunged them in the deep
 His bugle then the helmsman wound,
 Loud answer'd every echo round,
 From turret, rock and bay,
 The postern's hinges crash and groan,
 And soon the Warder's cresset shone
 On those rude steps of slippery stone,
 To light the upward way
 "Thrice welcome, holy Sire!" he said,
 "Full long the spousal train have staid,
 And, vex'd at thy delay,

500

510

The darksome night and freshening breeze
Had driven thy bark astray"—

XXV

"Warder," the younger stranger said,
"Thine erring-guess some mirth had made
In mirthful hour, but nights like these, 520
When the rough winds wake western seas,
Brook not of glee We crave some aid
And needful shelter for this maid

Until the break of day,
For, to ourselves, the deck's rude plank
Is easy as the mossy bank
That's breath'd upon by May
And for our storm-toss'd skiff we seek
Short shelter in this leeward creek,
Prompt when the dawn the east shall streak 530
Again to bear away"—

Answered the Warder, "In what name
Assert ye hospitable claim?

Whence come, or whither bound?
Hath Erin seen your parting sails,
Or come ye on Norwayan gales?
And seek ye England's fertile vales,
Or Scotland's mountain ground?"—

XXVI

"Warriors— for other title none
For some brief space we list to own, 540
Bound by a vow—warriors are we,
In strife by land and storm by sea,

We have been known to fame,
And these brief words have import dear,
When sounded in a noble ear,
To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
That gives us rightful claim

Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy ,
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorn'd by the noble and the bold,
 Shunn'd by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea ! ”—

550

XXVII

“Bold stranger, no—’gainst claim like thine,
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
 Though urged in tone that more express’d
 A monarch than a suppliant guest
 Be what you will, Aitornish Hall
 On this glad eve is free to all
 Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
 ’Gainst our ally, great England’s Lord,
 Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
 To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
 Or, outlaw’d, dwelt by greenwood tree
 With the fierce Knight of Elleslie,
 Or aided even the murderous strife,
 When Comyn fell beneath the knife
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce,
 This night had been a term of truce —
 Ho, vassals ! give these guests your care,
 And show the narrow postern stair ”

560

570

XXVIII

To land these two bold brethren leapt,
 (The weary crew their vessel kept,)
 And, lighted by the torches’ flare,
 That seaward flung their smoky glare,
 The younger knight that maiden bare
 Half lifeless up the rock ,
 On his strong shoulder lean’d her head,

And down her long dark tresses shed, 580
 As the wild vine in tendrils spread,
 Droops from the mountain oak
 Him follow'd close that elder Lord,
 And in his hand a sheathed sword,
 Such as few arms could wield,
 But when he boun'd him to such task,
 Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
 And rend the surest shield

XXIX

The raised portcullis' arch they pass,
 The wicket with its bars of brass, 590
 The entrance long and low,
 Flank'd at each turn by loop-holes strait,
 Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
 (If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
 To gall an entering foe
 But every jealous post of ward
 Was now defenceless and unbarr'd,
 And all the passage free
 To one low brow'd and vaulted room,
 Where squire and yeoman, page and groom, 600
 Phied their loud revelry

XXX

And "Rest ye here," the Wanderer bade,
 "Till to our Lord your suit is said —
 And, comrades, gave not on the maid,
 And on these men who ask our aid,
 As if ye ne'er had seen
 A damsel tied of midnight bark,
 Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
 And bearing martial mien "
 But not for Eachin's reproof 610
 Would page or vassal stand aloof,

But crowded on to stare,
 As men of courtesy untaught,
 Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
 From one, the foremost there,
 His chequer'd plaid, and in its shroud,
 To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
 Involved his sister fair
 His brother, as the clansman bent
 His sullen brow in discontent, 620
 Made brief and stern excuse, —
 "Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
 That decks thy lord in bridal hall,
 'Twere honour'd by her use "

XXXI

Proud was his tone, but calm, his eye
 Had that compelling dignity,
 His mien that bearing haught and high,
 Which common spirits fear,
 Needed nor word nor signal more,
 Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o'er, 630
 Upon each other back they bore,
 And gazed like startled deer
 But now appear'd the Seneschal,
 Commission'd by his lord to call
 The strangers to the Baron's hall,
 Where feasted fair and free
 That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
 With Edith there his lovely bride,
 And her bold brother by her side,
 And many a chief, the flower and pride 640
 Of Western land and sea

Here pause we, gentles, for a space,
 And, if our tale hath won your grace,
 Grant us brief patience, and again
 We will renew the minstrel strain

CANTO SECOND

I

FILL the bright goblet, spread the festive board '
 Summon the gay, the noble, and the fan '
 Through the loud hall, in joyous conceit pour'd,
 Let mirth and music sound the dirge of Care '
 But ask thou not if Happiness be there,
 If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throe,
 Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear ,
 Lift not the festal mask '—enough to know,
 No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe

II

With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,	10
With all that olden time deem'd gay,	
The Island Chieftain feasted high ,	
But there was in his troubled eye	
A gloomy fire, and on his brow	
Now sudden flush'd, and faded now,	
Emotions such as draw their birth	
From deeper source than festal mirth	
By fits he paused, and harper's strain	
And jester's tale went round in vain,	
Or fell but on his idle ear	20
Like distant sounds which dreamers hear	
Then would he rouse him, and employ	
Each art to aid the clamorous joy,	
And call for pledge and lay,	
And, for brief space, of all the crowd,	
As he was loudest of the loud,	
Seem gayest of the gay	

•III

Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
 Mark'd in brief mirth, or musing long ,

The vacant brow, the unlistening ear, 30
 They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
 And his fierce starts of sudden glee
 Seem'd bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy
 Not thus alone misjudged the crowd,
 Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud
 And jealous of his honou d line,
 And that keen knight, De Argentine,
 (From England sent on errand high,
 The western league more firm to tie,)
 Both deem'd in Ronald's mood to find 40
 A lover's transport troubled mind
 But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
 Pierced deeper through the mystery,
 And watch'd, with agony and fear,
 Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer

IV

She watch'd—yet fear'd to meet his glance,
 And he shunn'd hers,—till when by chance
 They met, the point of foeman's lance
 Had given a milder pang !
 Beneath the intolerable smart 50
 He writhed,—then sternly mann'd his heart
 To play his hard but destined part,
 And from the table sprang
 “ Fill me the mighty cup ! ” he said,
 “ Erst own'd by Royal Somerled
 Fill it, till on the studded brim
 In burning gold the bubbles swim,
 And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine !
 To you, brave Lord, and brother mine, 60
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
 The Union of Our House with thine,
 By this fair bridal-link ! ”—

V

"Let it pass round!" quoth He of Lorn,

"And in good time—that winded hoim

Must of the Abbot tell,

The laggaid monk is come at last"

Lord Ronald heard the bugle-blast,

And on the floor at random cast,

The untasted goblet fell

70

But when the Warder in his ear

Tells other news, his blither cheer

Returns like sun of May,

When through a thunder cloud it beams!—

Lord of two hundred isles, he seems

As glad of brief delay,

As some poor criminal might feel,

When from the gibbet on the wheel

Respited for a day

VI

"Brother of Lorn," with hurried voice

80

He said, "and you, fair lords, rejoice!"

Here, to augment our glee,

Come wandering knights from travel far,

Well proved, they say, in strife of war,

And tempest on the sea—

Ho! give them at your board such place

As best their presences may grace,

And bid them welcome free!"

With solemn step, and silver wand,

The Seneschal the presence scann'd

90

Of these strange guests, and well he knew

How to assign their rank its due,

For though the costly furs

That erst had deck'd their caps were torn,

And their gay robes were over-worn,

And soil'd their gilded spurs,

Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their face,
 As suited best the princely dais,
 And royal canopy , 100
 And there he marshall'd them their place,
 First of that company

VII

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide,
 That gave to guests unnamed, unknown,
 A place so near their prince's throne ,
 But Owen Enaught said—
 "For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bowers and hall
 Has been my honour'd trade 110
 Worship and birth to me are known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furr'd robe or broader'd zone ,
 And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three strangers oft have sate
 In higher place than now" —

VIII

"I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
 "Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell ,— 120
 Mark'd ye the younger stranger's eye,
 My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
 How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the noble rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,
 Because the owner might not brook
 On any save his peers to look ?
 And yet it moves me more,

That steady, calm, majestic brow,
 With which the elder chief even now 130
 Scann'd the gay presence o'er,
 Like being of superior kind,
 In whose high toned impartial mind
 Degrees of mortal rank and state
 Seem objects of indifferent weight
 The lady too—though closely tied
 The mantle veil both face and eye,
 Her motions' grace it could not hide,
 Nor could her form's fair symmetry "

IX

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn 140
 Lour'd on the haughty front of Lorn
 From underneath his brows of pride,
 The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
 And whisper'd closely what the ear
 Of Argentine alone might hear ,
 Then question'd, high and brief,
 If, in their voyage, aught they knew
 Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
 Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
 With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief ? 150
 And if, their winter's exile o'er,
 They harbour'd still by Ulster's shore,
 Or launch'd their galleys on the main,
 To vex their native land again ?

X

That younger stranger, fierce and high,
 At once confronts the Chieftain's eye
 With look of equal scorn ,—
 " Of rebels have we nought to show ,
 But if of royal Bruce thou'dst know,
 I warn thee he has sworn, 160

Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
 His banner Scottish winds shall blow,
 Despite each mean or mighty foe,
 From England's every bill and bow,
 To Allaster of Lorn"

Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
 But Ronald quench'd the rising fire —
 "Brother, it better suits the time
 To chase the night with Ferrand's rhyme,
 Than wake, 'midst mirth and wine, the jais
 That flow from these unhappy wars"—

170

"Content," said Lorn, and spoke apart
 With Ferrand, master of his art,

Then whisper'd Argentine,—
 "The lay I named will carry smart
 To these bold strangers' haughty heart,
 If right this guess of mine"
 He ceased, and it was silence all,
 Until the minstrel waked the hall

XI

The Broach of Lorn

"Whence the broach of burning gold,
 That clasps the Chieftain's mantle-fold,
 Wrought and chased with rare device,
 Studded fair with gems of price,
 On the varied taptans beaming,
 As, through night's pale rainbow gleaming,
 Fainter now, now seen afar,
 Fitful shines the northern star?"

180

"Gem! ne'er wrought on Highland mountain,
 Did the fairy of the fountain,
 Or the mermaid of the wave,
 Frame thee in some coral cave?
 Did, in Iceland's darksome mine,

190

Dwarf's swart hands thy metal twin?
 OI, mortal moulded, comest thou here,
 From England's love, or France's fear?

XII

Song continued

"No!—thy splendours nothing tell
 Foreign art or faery spell
 Moulded thou for monarch's use,
 By the overweening Bruce,
 When the royal robe he tied 200
 O'er a heart of wiath and pride,
 Thence in triumph wert thou torn,
 By the victor hand of Lorn!

"When the gem was won and lost,
 Widely was the wail-cry toss'd!
 Rung aloud Bendounish fell,
 Answer'd Douchat's sounding dell,
 Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
 When the homicide, o'ercome,
 Hardly 'scaped with scathe and scorn, 210
 Left the pledge with conquering Lorn!

XIII

Song concluded

"Vain was then the Douglas brand,
 Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
 Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody duk,
 Making sure of murder's work,
 Barendown fled fast away,
 Fled the fiery De la Haye,
 When this broach, triumphant borne,
 Beam'd upon the breast of Lorn
 "Farthest fled its former Lord, 220
 Left his men to brand and cord,

Bloody brand of Highland steel,
 English gibbet, axe, and wheel
 Let him fly from coast to coast,
 Dogg'd by Comyn's vengeful ghost,
 While his spoils, in triumph worn,
 Long shall grace victorious Lorn !"

XIV

As glazes the tiger on his foes,
 Hemm'd in by hunters, spears, and bows,
 And, ere he bounds upon the ring, 230
 Selects the object of his spring, —
 Now on the Bard, now on his Lord,
 So Edward glaz'd and grasp'd his sword—
 But stern his brother spoke,—“ Be still
 What ' art thou yet so wild of will,
 After high deeds and sufferings long,
 To chafe thee for a menial's song ?—
 Well hast thou framed, Old Man, thy strains,
 To praise the hand that pays thy pains '
 Yet something might thy song have told 240
 Of Lorn's three vassals, true and bold,
 Who rent their Lord from Bruce's hold,
 As underneath his knee he lay,
 And died to save him in the fray
 I've heard the Bruce's cloak and clasp
 Was clench'd within their dying grasp,
 What time a hundred foemen more
 Rush'd in, and back the victor bore,
 Long after Lorn had left the strife,
 Full glad to 'scape with limb and life — 250
 Enough of this—And, Minstrel, hold,
 As minstrel-hire, this chain of gold,
 For future lays a fair excuse,
 To speak more nobly of the Bruce' —

XV

"Now, by Columba's shrine, I swear,
 And every saint that's buried there,
 'Tis he himself!" Lorn sternly cries,
 "And for my kinsman's death he dies"
 As loudly Ronald calls—"Forbear!
 Not in my sight while brand I wear, 260
 O'ermatch'd by odds, shall warrior fall,
 Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
 This ancient fortress of my race
 Shall be misfortune's resting place,
 Shelter and shield of the distress'd,
 No slaughter-house for shipwreck'd guest"—
 "Talk not to me," fierce Lorn replied,
 "Of odds or match!"—when Comyn died,
 Three daggers clash'd within his side!
 Talk not to me of sheltering hall, 270
 The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
 On God's own altar stream'd his blood,
 While o'er my prostrate kinsman stood
 The ruthless murderer—e'en as now—
 With armed hand and scornful brow!
 Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
 And lay the outlaw'd felons low!"

XVI

Then up sprang many a mainland Lord,
 Obedient to their Chieftain's word
 Barcaldine's arm is high in air, 280
 And Kinloch Aline's blade is bare,
 Black Muirthok's duk-ha's left its sheath,
 And clench'd is Dermid's hand of death
 Their mutter'd threats of vengeance swell
 Into a wild and warlike yell,

Onward they press with weapons high,
 The affrighted females shriek and fly,
 And, Scotland, then thy brightest law
 Had darken'd ere its noon of day,
 But every chief of birth and fame, 290
 That from the Isles of Ocean came,
 At Ronald's side that hour withstood
 Fierce Loyn's relentless thirst for blood

XVII

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
 Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
 Mac Niel, wild Bua's ancient thane,
 Duart, of bold Clan-Gillian's strain,
 Feigus, of Canna's castled bay,
 Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
 Soon as they saw the broadsword's glance, 300
 With ready weapons rose at once,
 More prompt, that many an ancient feud,
 Full oft suppress'd, full oft renew'd,
 Glow'd 'twixt the chieftains of Aigyle
 And many a lord of ocean's isle
 Wild was the scene---each sword was bare,
 Back stream'd each chieftain's shaggy hair,
 In gloomy opposition set
 Eyes, hands, and brandish'd weapons met,
 Blue gleaming o'er the social board 310
 Flash'd to the torches many a sword,
 And soon those bridal lights may shine
 On purple blood for 1087 wine

XVIII

While thus for blows and death prepared
 Each heart was up, each weapon bared,
 Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
 Still revered hospitable laws,

All menaced violence, but alike
 Reluctant each the first to strike,
 (For aye accused in minstrel line 320
 Is he who brawls 'mid song and wine,)
 And, match'd in numbers and in might,
 Doubtful and desperate seem'd the fight
 Thus threat and murmur died away,
 Till on the crowded hall there lay
 Such silence, as the deadly still,
 Ere bursts the thunder on the hill
 With blade advanced, each Chieftain bold
 Show'd like the Swordsman's form of old,
 As wanting still the torch of life 330
 To wake the marble into strife

XIX

That awful pause the stranger maid,
 And Edith, seized to pray for aid
 As to De Argentine she clung,
 Away her veil the stranger flung,
 And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
 Fast stream'd her eyes, wide flow'd her hair —
 "O thou, of knighthood once the flower,
 Sure refuge in distressful hour,
 Thou, who in Judah well hast fought 340
 For our dear faith, and oft hast sought
 Renown in knightly exercise,
 When this poor hand has dealt the prize,
 Say, can thy soul of honour brook
 On the unequal strife to look,
 When, butcher'd thus in peaceful hall,
 Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall!"
 To Argentine she turn'd her word,
 But her eye sought the Island Lord
 A flush like evening's setting flame 350
 Glow'd on his cheek, his hardy frame,

As with a brief convulsion, shook
 With hurried voice and eager look,—
 "Fear not," he said, "my Isabel !
 What said I—Edith !—all is well—
 Nay, fear not—I will well provide
 The safety of my lovely bride—
 My bride ?"—but there the accents clung
 In tremor to his faltering tongue

XX

Now rose De Argentine, to claim 360
 The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
 To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
 'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
 (Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
 His care then safety to provide,
 For knight more true in thought and deed
 Than Argentine ne'er spurr'd a steed)—
 And Ronald, who his meaning guess'd,
 Seem'd half to sanction the request
 This purpose fiery Torquil broke — 370
 'Somewhat we've heard of England's yoke,"
 He said, "and, in our islands, Fame
 Hath whisper'd of a lawful claim,
 That calls the Bruce far Scotland's Lord,
 Though dispossess'd by foreign sword
 This craves reflection—but though right
 And just the charge of England's Knight,
 Let England's crown her rebels seize
 Where she has power,—in towers like these,
 'Midst Scottish Chieftains summon'd here 380
 To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
 Be sure, with no consent of mine,
 Shall either Lorn or Argentine
 With chains or violence, in our sight,
 Oppress a brave and banish'd Knight "

XXI

Then waked the wild debate again,
 With brawling threat and clamour vain
 Vassals and menials, thionging in,
 Lent their brute rage to swell the din ,
 When, far and wide, a bugle-clang 390
 From the dark ocean upward rang
 "The Abbot comes !" they cry at once,
 ' The holy man, whose favour'd glance
 Hath sainted visions known ,
 Angels have met him on the way,
 Beside the blessed martyr's bay,
 And by Columba's stone
 His monks have heard their hymnings high
 Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
 To cheer his penance lone, 400
 When at each cross, on guth and wold,
 (Their number thrice a hundred-fold,)
 His prayer he made, his beads he told,
 With Aves many a one—
 He comes our feuds to reconcile,
 A sainted man from sainted isle ,
 We will his holy doom abide,
 The Abbot shall our strife decide "

XXII

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
 When through the wide revolving doo 410
 The black stol'd brethren wind
 Twelve sandall'd monks, who relics bore,
 With many a torch-bearer before,
 And many a cross behind
 Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
 And dagger bright and flashing brand
 Dropp'd swiftly at the sight ,

They vanish'd from the Churchman's eye,
 As shooting stars, that glance and die,
 Dart from the vault at night 420

XXIII

The Abbot on the threshold stood,
 And in his hand the holy rod,
 Back on his shoulders flow'd his hood,
 The torch's glaring ray
 Show'd, in its red and flashing light,
 His wither'd cheek and amice white,
 His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
 His tresses scant and gray
 "Fair Lords," he said, "Our Lady's love,
 And peace be with you from above, 430
 And Benedicite !—
 —But what means this ?—no peace is here !—
 Do duks unsheathed suit bridal cheer ?
 Or are these naked brands
 A seemly show for Churchman's sight,
 When he comes summon'd to unite
 Betiothed hearts and hands ?"

XXIV

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
 Proud Lorn first answer'd the appeal,—
 "Thou comest, O holy Man, 440
 True sons of blessed church to greet,
 But little deeming here to meet
 A wretch, beneath the ban
 Of Pope and Church, for murder done
 Even on the sacred altar-stone—
 Well may'st thou wonder we should know
 Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,
 Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,
 With excommunicated Bruce !

Yet well I grant, to end debate, 450
Thy sainted voice decide his fate "

XXV

Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
And knighthood's oath and honour's laws ,
And Isabel, on bended knee,
Brought pray'rs and tears to back the plea
And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy pray'd
" Hence," he exclaim'd, " degenerate maid !
Was't not enough, to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour, 460
Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
His careless cold approach to wait ?—
But the bold Lord of Cumberland
The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand ,
His it shall be—Nay, no reply !
Hence ! till those rebel eyes be dry "—
With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
Yet nought relax'd his brow of awe

XXVI

Then Argentine, in England's name,
So highly urged his sovereign's claim, 470
He wak'd a spark, that, long suppress'd,
Had smoulder'd in Lord Ronald's breast ,
And now, as from the flint the fire,
Flash'd forth at once his generous ire
" Enough of noble blood," he said,
" By English Edward had been shed,
Since matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green,
And done to death by felon hand,
For guarding well his father's land 480

Where's Nigel Bruce ? and De la Haye,
 And valiant Seton—where are they ?
 Where Somerville, the kind and fice ?
 And Fraser, flower of chivalry ?
 Have they not been on gibbet bound,
 Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,
 And hold we here a cold debate,
 To yield more victims to their fate ?
 What ! can the English Leopard's mood
 Never be gorged with northern blood ? 490
 Was not the life of Athole shed,
 To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed ?
 And must his word, till dying day,
 Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay !—
 Thou frown'st, De Argentine,—My gage
 Is prompt to prove the strife I wage"—

XXVII

"Nor deem," said stout Dunvegan's knight,
 "That thou shalt brave alone the fight !
 By saints of isle and mainland both,
 By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,) 500
 Let Rome and England do their worst,
 However attainted or accus'd,
 If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
 Once more to brave a battle-plain,
 If Douglas couch again his lance,
 Or Randolph dare another chance,
 Old Torquil will not be to lack
 With twice a thousand at his back —
 Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
 Good Abbot ! for thou know'st of old, 510
 Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
 Smack of the wild Norwegian still,
 Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
 For England's wealth, or Rome's applause

XXVIII

The Abbot seem'd with eye severe
 The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear ,
 Then on King Robert turn'd the Monk,
 But twice his courage came and sunk,
 Confronted with the hero's look ,
 Twice fell his eye, his accents shook , 520
 At length, resolved in tone and brow,
 Sternly he question'd him—" And thou,
 Unhappy ! what hast thou to plead,
 Why I denounce not on thy deed
 That awful doom which canons tell
 Shuts paradise, and opens hell ,
 Anathema of power so dread,
 It blends the living with the dead,
 Bids each good angel soar away,
 And every ill one claim his prey , 530
 Expels thee from the church's care,
 And deafens Heaven against thy prayer ,
 Arms every hand against thy life,
 Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
 Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant,
 With meanest alms relieves thy want ,
 Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead,
 Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
 Rends Honour's scutcheon from thy hearse,
 Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse, 540
 And spurns thy corpse from hallow'd ground,
 Flung like vile carrion to the hound ,
 Such is the dire and desperate doom
 For sacrilege, decreed by Rome ,
 And such the well deserved meed
 Of thine unhallow'd, ruthless deed "—

XXIX

“Abbot !” the Bruce replied, “thy charge
It boots not to dispute at large
This much, howe’er, I bid thee know,
No selfish vengeance dealt the blow 550
For Comyn died his country’s foe
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
Fulfill’d my soon-repent’d deed,
Nor censure those from whose stain tongue
The dire anathema has rung
I only blame mine own wild ire,
By Scotland’s wrongs incensed to fire
Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,
And hears a penitent’s appeal 560
From papal curse and prelate’s zeal
My first and dearest task achieved,
Fair Scotland from her thralldom relieved,
Shall many a priest in cope and stole
Say requiem for Red Comyn’s soul,
While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance
In Palestine, with sword and lance
But, while content the Church should know
My conscience owns the debt I owe, 570
Unto De Argentine and Lorn
The name of traitor I return,
Bid them defiance stern and high,
And give them in their throats the lie !
These brief words spoke, I speak no more
Do what thou wilt, my shift is o’er”

XXX

Like man by prodigy amazed,
Upon the King the Abbot gazed,

Then o'er his pallid features glance,
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance 580
 His breathing came more thick and fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering light,
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flush'd is his brow, through every vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguished accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spoke

XXXI

"De Bruce ! I rose with purpose dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head, 590
 And give thee as an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy gore,—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, Heaven-controll'd,
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repress'd
 It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains !—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe 600
 O'er-master'd yet by high behest,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd !"
 He spoke, and o'er the astonish'd throng
 Was silence, awful, deep, and long

XXXII

Again that light has fired his eye,
 Again his form swells bold and high,
 The broken voice of age is gone,
 'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone —
 "Thrice vanquish'd on the battle plain,
 Thy followers slaughter'd, fled, or ta'en, 610

A hunted wanderer on the wild,
 On foreign shores a man exiled,
 Disown'd, deserted, and distress'd,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd !
 Bless'd in the hall and in the field,
 Under the mantle as the shield
 Avenger of thy country's shame,
 Restorer of her injured fame,
 Bless'd in thy sceptre and thy sword,
 De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful Lord, 620
 Bless'd in thy deeds and in thy fame,
 What lengthen'd honours wait thy name !
 In distant ages, sire to son
 Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
 And teach his infants, in the use
 Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce
 Go, then, triumphant ! sweep along
 Thy course, the theme of many a song !
 The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
 Hath bless'd thee, and thou shalt be bless'd ! — 630
 Enough—my short-lived strength decays,
 And sinks the momentary blaze —
 Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
 Not here must nuptial vow be spoke ,
 Brethren, our enid here is o'er,
 Our task discharged — Unmoor, unmoor ! ” —
 His priests receiv'd the exhausted Monk,
 As breathless in their arms he sunk
 Punctual his orders to obey,
 The train refused all longer stay, 640
 Embark'd, rais'd sail, and bore away

CANTO THIRD

I

HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er thy startled head
 Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has roll'd,
 How when its echoes fell, a silence dead
 Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold ?
 The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
 The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
 The wall-flower waves not on the ruin'd hold,
 Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
 The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning hill

II

Artornish ! such a silence sunk	10
Upon thy halls, when that grey Monk	
His prophet-speech had spoke ,	
And his obedient brethren's sail	
Was stretch'd to meet the southern gale	
Before a whisper woke	
Then murmuring sounds of doubt and fear,	
Close pour'd in many an anxious ear,	
The solemn stillness broke ,	
And still they gazed with eager guess,	
Where, in an oriel's deep recess,	20
The Island Prince seem'd bent to press	
What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,	
And gesture fierce, scarce deign'd to hear	

III

Starting at length with frowning look,
 His hand he clench'd, his head he shook,
 And sternly flung apart,—
 “And deem'st thou me so mean of mood,

And Cormac Doil in haste obey'd,
Hoisted his sail, his anchor weigh'd,
(For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil)
But others, lingering, spoke apart,—
“The maid has given her maiden heart

To Ronald of the Isles,
And, fearful lest her brother's word
Bestow her on that English Lord,

70

She seeks Iona's piles,
And wisely deems it best to dwell
A votaress in the holy cell,
Until these feuds so fierce and fell
The Abbot reconciles ”

v

As, impotent of ire, the hall
Echoed to Lorn's impatient call—
“My horse, my mantle, and my train !
Let none who honour's Lorn remain !”—
Courteous, but stern, a bold request
To Bruce De Argentine express'd —
“Lord Earl,” he said,—“I cannot chuse
But yield such title to the Bruce,
Though name and earldom both are gone,
Since he braced rebel's armour on—
But, Earl or Serf—rude phrase was thine
Of late, and launch'd at Argentine ,
Such as compels me to demand
Redress of honour at thy hand
We need not to each other tell,
That both can wield their weapons well ,

80

90

Then do me but the soldier grace,
This glove upon thy helm to place
Where we may meet in fight ,
And I will say, as still I've said,

Though by ambition far misled,
Thou art a noble knight"—

VI

"And I," the princely Bruce replied,
"Might term it stain on knighthood's pride,
That the bright sword of Argentine 200
Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine ,
But, for your brave request,
Be sure the honour'd pledge you gave
In every battle-field shall wave
Upon my helmet crest ,
Believe, that if my hasty tongue
Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
It shall be well redress'd
Not dearer to my soul was glove
Bestow'd in youth by lady's love 110
Than this which thou hast given !
Thus, then, my noble foe I greet ,
Health and high fortune till we meet,
And then—what pleases Heaven "

VII

Thus parted they—for now, with sound
Like waves roll'd back from rocky ground,
The friends of Lorn return ,
Each mainland chieftain, with his train,
Draws to his mountain towers again,
Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain, 120
And mortal hopes expire
But through the castle double guard,
By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
Wicket and gate were trebly barr'd,
By beam and bolt and chain ,
Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
He pray'd excuse for mirth broke short,

And bade them in Artoinish fort
 In confidence remain
 Now torch and menial tendance led 130
 Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
 And beads were told, and Aves said,
 And soon they sunk away
 Into such sleep as wont to shed
 Oblivion on the weary head,
 After a toilsome day

VIII

But soon uproused, the Monarch cried
 To Edward slumbering by his side,
 "Awake, or sleep for aye !"
 Even now there jam'd a secret door— 140
 A taper-light gleams on the floor—
 Up, Edward ! up, I say !
 Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
 Nay, strike not ! 'tis our noble Host"
 Advancing then his taper's flame,
 Ronald stept forth, and with him came
 Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
 To Bruce in sign of fealty,
 And proffer'd him his sword,
 And hail'd him, in a monarch's style, 150
 As king of mainland and of isle,
 And Scotland's nightful lord
 "And O," said Ronald, "Own'd of Heaven !
 Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
 By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
 Who rebel falchion drew,
 Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
 Even while I strove against thy claim,
 Paid homage just and true ?"—
 "Alas ! dear youth, the unhappy time," 160
 Answer'd the Bruce, "must bear the crime,

Since, guiltier far than you,
 Even I"—he paused, for Falkirk's woes,
 Upon his conscious soul arose
 The Chieftain to his breast he press'd,
 And in a sigh conceal'd the rest

They proffer'd aid, by arms and might,
 To repossess him in his right,
 But well their counsels must be weigh'd,
 Ere banners rais'd and musters made, 170
 For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
 Bound many chiefs in southern leagues
 In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
 To his new vassals frankly told —
 "The winter worn in exile o'er,
 I long'd for Carrick's kindred shore
 I thought upon my native Ayr,
 And long'd to see the burly fare
 That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
 Now echoes through my father's hall 180
 But first my course to Arian led,
 Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
 And on the sea, by tempest toss'd,
 Our barks dispersed, our purpose cross'd,
 Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
 Far from her destined course had run,
 When that wise will, which masters ours,
 Compell'd us to your friendly towers"

x

Then Torquil spoke — "The time craves speed
 We must not linger in our deed, 190
 But instant pray our Sovereign Liege,
 To shun the perils of a siege

The vengeful Loyn, with all his powers,
 Lies but too near Artoirish towers,
 And England's light-arm'd vessels hide,
 Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
 Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
 And sweep each strait, and guard each shore
 Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
 Secret and safe my Liege must lie 200
 In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
 Torquil thy pilot and thy guide"—
 "Not so, brave Chieftain," Ronald cried,
 "Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
 And raise in arms the men of Sleate,
 Whilst thou, renown'd where chiefs debate,
 Shalt sway their souls by council sage,
 And awe them by the locks of age"
 —"And if my words in weight shall fail,
 This ponderous sword shall turn the scale" 210

XI

"The scheme," said Bruce, "contents me well,
 Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,
 For safety, with my bark and crew,
 Again to friendly Erin drew
 There Edward, too, shall with her wend,
 In need to cheer her and defend,
 And muster up each scatter'd friend"—
 Here seem'd it as Lord Ronald's ear
 Would other counsel gladder hear,
 But, all achieved as soon as plann'd, 220
 Both barks, in secret arm'd and mann'd,
 From out the haven bore,
 On different voyage forth they ply,
 This for the coast of winged Skye,
 And that for Erin's shore

Came brawling down its bed of rock, 260
To mingle with the main

XIII

A while their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain-deer,
Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,—
“Saint Mary ! what a scene is here !
I’ve travell’d many a mountain-strand,
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led ,
Thus, many a waste I’ve wander’d o’er, 270
Clomb many a crag, cross’d many a moor,
But, by my halidome,
A scene so rude, so wild as this,
Yet so sublime in barrenness,
Ne’er did my wandering footsteps press,
Where’er I happ’d to roam ”

XIV

No marvel thus the Monarch spake ,
For rarely human eye has known
A scene so stern as that dread lake,
With its dark ledge of barren stone 280
Seems that primeval earthquake’s sway
Hath rent a strange and shatter’d way
Through the rude bosom of the hill,
And that each naked precipice,
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
Tells of the outrage still
The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of Nature’s genial glow ,
On high Benmore green mosses grow,

And heath bells bud in deep Glencloe, 290
 And copse on Cruchan Ben ,
 But here,—above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
 Nor aught of vegetative power, '
 The weeny eye may ken
 For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring's sweet dew, 300
 That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain side

XV

And wilder, for ward as they wound,
 Were the proud cliffs and lake profound
 Huge terraces of granite black
 Afforded rude and cumber'd track ,
 For from the mountain hoar,
 Hurl'd headlong in some night of fear,
 When yell'd the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o'er , 310
 And some chance poised and balanced lay,
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
 In Nature's rage at random thrown,
 Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base
 The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left them foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle fur'd, 320
 Or on the sable waters curl'd,
 Or on the eddying breezes whurl'd,
 Dispersed in middle air

And oft, condensed, at once they lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
 And when return the sun's glad beams,
 Whiten'd with foam a thousand streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown

XVI

"This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear 330
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or deer,
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
 And yonder peak of dread,
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts,
 Which seam its shiver'd head?"—
 "Coriskin call the dark lake's name, 340
 Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
 Full oft their careless humours please
 By sportive names from scenes like these
 I would old Torquil were to show
 His maidens with their breasts of snow,
 Or that my noble Liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby ' 350
 (The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
 The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,
 Or that your eye could see the mood
 Of Corryviekin's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whiten'd hood—
 'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
 For scenes so stern, fantastic names"

XVII

Answer'd the Bruce, " And musing mind
 Might here a graver moral find
 These mighty cliffs, that heave on high 360
 Then naked blows to middle sky, ,
 Indifferent to the sun or snow,
 Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,
 May they not mark a Monarch's fate,—
 Raised high 'mid storms of strife and state,
 Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
 His soul a rock, his heart a waste ?
 O'er hope and love and fear aloft
 High rears his crowned head—But soft !
 Look, underneath yon jutting crag 370
 Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag
 Who may they be ? But late you said
 No steps these desert regions tread ?"—

XVIII

" So said I—and believed in sooth,"
 Ronald replied, " I spoke the truth
 Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
 Five men—they mark us, and come on ,
 And by their badge on bonnet borne,
 I guess them of the land of Loyn,
 Foes to my Liege "—" So let it be ; 380
 I've faced worse odds than five to three—
 —But the poor page can little aid ,
 Then be our battle thus array'd,
 If our free passage they contest ,
 Cope thou with two I'll match the rest"—
 " Not so, my Liege—for, by my life,
 This sword shall meet the treble strife ,
 My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
 And less the loss should Ronald fall,

But islesmen soon to soldiers grow , 390
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my Monarch's order given,
Two shafts should make our number even"—
"No ! not to save my life !" he said ,
"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spill'd—we soon shall know,
Whether they come as friend or foe "

XIX

Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh,—
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye
Men were they all of evil mien, 400
Down-look'd, unwilling to be seen,
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face
The foremost two were fair array'd,
With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,
And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears
The three, that lagg'd small space behind,
Seem'd selfs of more degraded kind,
Goat skins or deer-hides o'er them cast, 410
Made a rude fence against the blast,
Their arms and feet and heads were bare,
Matted their beards, unshorn their hair,
For arms, the catiffs bore in hand,
A club, an axe, a rusty brand

X1

Onward still mute, they kept the track,—
 “Tell who ye be, or else stand back,”
 Said Bruce, “In deserts when they meet,
 Men pass not as in peaceful street”
 Still, at his stern command, they stood,
 And proffer'd greeting brief and rude,

But acted courtesy so ill,
 As seem'd of fear, and not of will
 "Wanderers we are, as you may be,
 Men hither driven by wind and sea,
 Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
 Will share with you this fallow deer '—
 "If from the sea, where lies your bark?"—
 "Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
 Wreck'd yesternight but we are men, 430
 Who little sense of peril ken
 The shades come down—the day is shut—
 Will you go with us to our hut?"—
 "Our vessel waits us in the bay,
 Thanks for your proffer—have good-day"—
 "Was that your galley, then, which rode
 Not far from shore when evening glow'd?"—
 "It was"—"Then spare your needless pain,
 There will she now be sought in vain
 We saw her from the mountain head, 440
 When, with St George's blazon red
 A southern vessel bore in sight,
 And yours raised sail, and took to flight'—

XXI

"Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!"
 Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce,
 "Nor rests there light enough to show
 If this their tale be true or no
 The men seem bred of churlish kind,
 Yet mellow nuts have hardest rind,
 We will go with them—food and fire 450
 And sheltering roof our wants require
 Sure guard 'gainst treachery will we keep,
 And watch by turns our comrades' sleep.—
 Good fellows, thanks, your guests we'll be
 And well will pay the courtesy

Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—
—Nay, soft ! we mix not companies —
Show us the path o'er crag and stone,
And we will follow you,—lead on ”

XXII

They reach'd the dreary cabin, made 460
Of sails against a rock display'd,
And there, on entering, found
A slender boy, whose form and mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,
Low seated on the ground
His garb was such as minstrels wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
His youthful cheek was marr'd by care,
His eyes in sorrow drown'd 470
“ Whence this poor boy ? ”—As Ronald spoke,
The voice his trance of anguish broke ,
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and scream,
And wildly gazed around ,
Then to the wall his face he turn'd,
And his dark neck with blushes burn'd

XXIII

“ Whose is the boy ? ” again he said
“ By chance of war our captive made ,
He may be yours, if you should hold 480
That music has more charms than gold ,
For, though from earliest childhood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,
And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee ,

For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
 It pipes upon the galley's shroud,
 Makes blither melody"—
 "Hath he, then, sence of spoken sound?"— 490
 "Aye, so his mother bade us know,
 A cione in our late shipwreck drown'd,
 And hence the silly stripling's woe
 More of the youth I cannot say,
 Our captive but since yesterday,
 When wind and weather wad so grim,
 We little listid think of him—
 But why waste time in idle words?
 Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords"
 Sudden the captive turn'd his head, 500
 And one quick glance to Ronald sped
 It was a keen and warning look,
 And well the Chief the signal took

XXIV

"Kind host," he said, "our needs require
 A separate board and separate fire,
 For know, that on a pilgrimage
 Wend I, my comrade, and this page
 And, sworn to vigil and to fast,
 Long as this hallow'd task shall last,
 We never doff the plaid or sword, 510
 Or feast us at a stranger's board,
 And never share one common sleep,
 But one must still his vigil keep
 Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
 We'll hold this hut's remoter end"—
 "A churlish vow," the elder said,
 "And hard, methinks, to be obey'd
 How say you, if, to wreak the scorn
 That pays our kindness harsh return,
 We should refuse to share our meal?"— 520

"Then say we, that our swards are steel !
 And our vow binds us not to fast,
 Where gold or force may buy repast"—
 Their host's dark brow grew keen and fell,
 His teeth are clench'd, his features swell ,
 Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
 Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
 Nor could his craven courage brook
 The Monarch's calm and dauntless look
 With laugh constrain'd—"Let every man 530
 Follow the fashion of his clan !
 Each to his separate quarters keep,
 And feed or fast, or wake or sleep"

XXV

Their fire at separate distance burns,
 By turns they eat, keep guard by turns ,
 For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
 Dark and designing, fierce yet shy
 Still he avoided forward look,
 But slow, and circumspectly took
 A circling, never-ceasing glance, 540
 By doubt and cunning mark'd at once,
 Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
 From under eyebrows shagg'd and gray
 The younger, too, who seem'd his son,
 Had that dark look the timid shun ,
 The half-clad seifs behind them sate,
 And scowl'd a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
 Till all, as darkness onward crept,
 Couch'd down, and seem'd to sleep, or slept
 Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue 550
 Must trust his eyes to wail his wrong,
 A longer watch of sorrow made,
 But stretch'd his limbs to slumber laid

XXVI

Not in his dangerous host confides
 The King, but wary watch provides
 Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
 Then wakes the King, young Allan last,
 Thus rank'd, to give the youthful page
 The rest requir'd by tender age
 What is Lord Ronald's wakeful thought, 560
 To chase the languor toil had brought /—
 (For deem not that he deign'd to throw
 Much care upon such coward foe)—
 He thinks of lovely Isabel,
 When at her foeman's feet she fell,
 Nor less when, placed in princely selle,
 She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
 At Woodstocke when he won the prize
 Not, fain in joy, in sorrow fain,
 In pride of place as mid despair, 570
 Must she alone engross his care
 His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
 To Edith, turn—O how decide,
 When here his love and heart are given,
 And there his faith stands plight to Heaven !
 No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
 For seldom lovers long for sleep
 Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
 Answer'd the dog-fox with his howl,
 Then waked the King—at his request, 580
 Lord Ronald stretch'd himself to rest

XXVII

What spell was good King Robert's, say,
 To drive the weary night away ?
 His was the patriot's burning thought,
 Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
 Of castles storm'd, of cities freed,

Of deep design and daring deed,
 Of England's roses reft and torn,
 And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,
 Of rout and rally, war and truce,— 590
 As heroes think, so thought the Bruce
 No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
 Sleep shunn'd the Monarch's thoughtful eye
 Now over Coolin's eastern head
 The greyish light begins to spread,
 The otter to his cavern drew,
 And clamour'd shrill the wakening mew,
 Then watch'd the Page—to needful rest
 The King resigned his anxious breast

XXVIII

To Allan's eyes was harder task 600
 The weary watch their safeties ask
 He trimm'd the fire, and gave to shine
 With bickering light the splinter'd pine,
 Then gazed a while, where silent laid
 Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid
 But little fear waked in his mind,
 For he was bred of martial kind,
 And, if to manhood he arrive,
 May match the boldest knight alive
 Then thought he of his mother's tower, 610
 His little sisters' greenwood bower,
 How there the Easter-gambols pass,
 And of Dan Joseph's lengthen'd mass
 But still before his weary eye
 In rays prolong'd the blazes die—
 Again he roused him—on the lake
 Look'd forth, where now the twilight-flake
 Of pale gold dawn began to wake
 On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay fuil'd,
 The morning breeze the lake had cuil'd, 620

The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
 With ceaseless plash kiss'd cliff or sand,—
 It was a slumbrous sound—he turn'd,
 To tales at which his youth had burn'd,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon cross'd,
 Of spightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
 Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell 630
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
 And on his sight the vaults arise
 That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling spars
 Glean like a firmament of stars!
 —Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak
 Her anger in that thrilling shriek!—
 No! all too late, with Allan's dream
 Mingled the captive's warning scream 640
 As from the ground he strives to start,
 A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
 Upwards he casts his dizzy eyes,
 Murmurs his master's name, and dies!

XXIX

Not so awoke the King! his hand
 Snatch'd from the flame a knotted brand,
 The nearest weapon of his wrath,
 With this he cross'd the murderer's path,
 And venged young Allan well!
 The spatter'd brain and bubbling blood 650
 Hiss'd on the half extinguish'd wood,
 The miscreant gasp'd and fell!
 Nor rose in peace the Island Lord,
 One carrion died upon his sword,

And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
 In mortal giapple overthrown
 But while Lord Ronald's dagger drank
 The life blood from his panting flank,
 The Father-ruffian of the band
 Behind him rears a coward hand ! 660

—O for a moment's aid,
 Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,
 Dash to the earth another foe,
 Above his comrade laid !—
 And it is gain'd—the captive sprung
 On the raised arm, and closely clung,
 And, ere he shook him loose,
 The master'd felon press'd the ground,
 And gasp'd beneath a mortal wound,
 While o'er him stands the Bruce 670

XXX

“Miscreant ! while lasts thy flitting spark,
 Give me to know the purpose dark,
 That arm'd thy hand with murderous knife,
 Against offenceless stranger's life ?”—
 —“No stranger thou !” with accent fell,
 Murmur'd the wretch, “I know thee well,
 And know thee for the foeman sworn
 Of my high Chief, the mighty Loyn”—
 “Speak yet again, and speak the truth
 For thy soul's sake !—from whence this youth ? 680
 His country, birth, and name declare,
 And thus one evil deed repair”—
 —“Vex me no more ! my blood runs cold
 No more I know than I have told
 We found him in a bark we sought
 With different purpose and I thought '
 Fate cut him short, in blood and broil,
 As he had lived, died Cormac Doil,

XXVI

Then resting on his bloody blade,
The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,— 690

“Now shame upon us both !— that boy

Lifts his mute face to heaven,
And clasps his hands, to testify
His gratitude to God on high,

For strange deliverance given
His speechless gesture thanks hath paid,
Which our free tongues have left unsaid !”

He raised the youth with kindly word,
But mark'd him shudder at the sword
He cleansed it from its hue of death, 700

And plunged the weapon in its sheath

“Alas, poor child ! unfitting part
Fate doom'd, when with so soft a heart,

And form so slight as thine,
She made thee first a pirate's slave,
Then, in his stead, a patron gave

Of wayward lot like mine ,
A landless prince, whose wandering life
Is but one scene of blood and strife—
Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be, 710
But he'll find resting place for thee —

Come, noble Ronald ! o'er the dead
Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been wick'd ,
Come, wend we hence—the day has broke
Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
Was false, that she had hoisted sail ”

XXVII

Yet, ere they left that chancel-cell,
The Island Lord bade sad farewell
To Allan —“ Who shall tell this tale,” 720
He said, “in halls of Donagaile !”

Oh, who his widow'd mother tell,
 That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell !—
 Rest thee, poor youth ! and trust my care
 For mass and knell and funeral prayer ,
 While o'er those cariffs, where they lie,
 The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry !"—
 And now the eastern mountain's head
 On the dark lake threw lustre red ,
 Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
 Ravine and precipice and peak—
 (So earthly power at distance shows ,
 Reveals his splendour, hides his woes)
 O'er sheets of granite, dark and broad,
 Rent and unequal, lay the road
 In sad discourse the warriors wind,
 And the mute captive moves behind

730

CANTO FOURTH

I

STRANGER ! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
 The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
 Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
 By lake and cataclact, her lonely throne ,
 Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
 Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
 Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
 Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
 And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky

Yes ! 'twas sublime, but sad —The loneliness
 Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye ,
 And strange and awful fears began to press
 Thy bosom with a stern solemnity

10

The Stuart stuns in Teviotdale,
 And Douglas wakes his native vale,
 Thy storm-toss'd fleet hath won its way
 With little loss to Brodick-Bay,
 And Lennox, with a gallant band,
 Waits but thy coming and command 50
 To waft them o'er to Carrick strand
 There are blithe news !—but mark the close !
 Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
 As with his host he northward pass'd,
 Hath on the borders breathed his last "

IV

Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
 Was little wont his joy to speak,
 But then his colour rose —
 "Now, Scotland ! shortly shalt thou see,
 With God's high will, thy children free, 60
 And vengeance on thy foes !
 Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
 Bear witness with me, Heaven, belongs
 My joy o'er Edward's bier,
 I took my knighthood at his hand,
 And lordship held of him, and land,
 And well may vouch it here,
 That, blot the story from his page,
 Of Scotland ruin'd in his rage,
 You read a monarch brave and sage, 70
 And to his people dear"—
 "Let London's burghers mourn her Lord,
 And Croydon monks his praise record,"
 The eager Edward said,
 "Eternal, as his own, my hate
 Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
 And dies not with the dead !

Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
 When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
 That pointed yet to Scotland's land, 80
 As his last accents pray'd
 Disgrace and curse upon his hen,
 If he one Scottish head should spare,
 Till stretch'd upon the bloody lair
 Each rebel corpse was laid !
 Such hate was his, when his last breath
 Renounced the peaceful house of death,
 And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
 Be borne by his remorseless host,
 As if his dead and stony eye 90
 Could still enjoy her misery !
 Such hate was his—dark, deadly, long ,
 Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong ! ”—

v

“ Let woman, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords
 Nor doubt of living foes to sate
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate
 Now, to the sea ! Behold the beach,
 And see the galleys' pendants stretch
 Their fluttering length down favouring gale ! 100
 Aboard, aboard ! and hoist the sail
 Hold we our way for Arrian first, ‘
 Where meet in arms our friends dispersed ,
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle fray
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard spread —
 Does noble Ronald share our course,
 Or stay to raise his island force ? ”—
 “ Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's side,” 110
 Replied the Chief, “ will Ronald bide

And since two galleys yonder ride,
 Be mine, so please my liege, dismiss'd
 To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
 And all who hear the Minche's roar
 On the Long Island's lonely shore
 The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
 Ourselves may summon in our way,
 And soon on Allan's shore shall meet,
 With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet, 120
 If aught avails then Chieftain's hest
 Among the islesmen of the west "

VI

Thus was then venturous council said
 But, ere their sails the galleys spread,
 Coriskin dark and Coolin high
 Echoed the dunge's doleful cry
 Along that sable lake pass'd slow—
 Fit scene for such a sight of woe—
 The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore
 The murder'd Allan to the shore 130
 At every pause, with dismal shout,
 Then coronach of grief rung out,
 And ever, when they moved again,
 The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
 And, with the pibroch's shrilling wail,
 Mourn'd the young heir of Donagaile
 Round and around, from cliff and cave,
 His answer stern old Coolin gave,
 Till high upon his misty side
 Languish'd the mournful notes, and died 140
 For never sounds, by mortal made,
 Attain'd his high and haggard head,
 That echoes but the tempest's moan,
 Or the deep thunder's rending groan

VII

Merily, merily bounds the bark,
 She bounds before the gale,
 The mountain breeze from Ben-na darch
 Is joyous in her sail '
 With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse
 The cords and canvass strain, 150
 The waves, divided by her force,
 In rippling eddies chased her course,
 As if they laugh'd again
 Not down the breeze more blithely flew,
 Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
 Than the gay galley bore
 Her course upon that favouring wind,
 And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
 And Slapin's cavern'd shore
 Twas then that warlike signals wake 160
 Dunscaith's dark towers and Eisdor's lake,
 And soon, from Cavilgarraigh's head,
 Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread,
 A summons these of war and wrath
 To the brave clans of Sleat and Strath,
 And, ready at the sight,
 Each warrior to his weapons sprung,
 And targe upon his shoulder flung,
 Impatient for the fight
 Mac-Kinnon's Chief, in warfare gray, 170
 Had charge to muster then array,
 And guide their barks to Brodick-Bay

VIII

Signal of Roland's high command,
 A beacon gleam'd o'er séa and land,
 From Canna's tower, that, steep and gray,
 Like falcon nest o'erhangs the bay

Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
To view the turret scathed by time ,
It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-deer 180
 But rest thee on the silver beach,
 And let the aged herdsman teach
 His tale of former day ,
 His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
 And for thy seat by ocean's side,
 His varied plaid display ,
Then tell, how with their Chieftain came,
In ancient times, a foreign dame
 To yonder turret gray
Stein was her Lord's suspicious mind, 190
Who in so rude a jail confined
 So soft and fair a thrall !
And oft, when moon on ocean slept,
That lovely lady sate and wept
 Upon the castle wall,
And turn'd her eye to southern climes,
And thought perchance of happier times,
And touch'd her lute by fits, and sung
Wild ditties in her native tongue
And still, when on the cliff and bay 200
Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
 And every breeze is mute,
Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
Steals a strange pleasure mix'd with fear,
While from that cliff he seems to hear
 The murmur of a lute,
And sounds, as of a captive lone,
That mourns her woes in tongue unknown
Strange is the tale—but all too long
Already hath it staid the song— 210
 Yet who may pass them by,
That crag and tower in ruins gray,

Not to then hapless tenant pay
The tribute of a sigh !

IX

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
O'er the broad ocean driven,
Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
The steerman's hand hath given
And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
Then hunters to the shore, 220
And each his ashen bow unbent
And gave his pastime o'er,
And at the Island Lord's command
For hunting spear took warrior's brand
On Scooriegg next a warning light
Summon'd her warriors to the fight ,
A numerous race, ere stein MacLeod
O'er then bleak shores in vengeance strode,
When all in vain the ocean-cave
Its refuge to his victims gave 230
The Chief, relentless in his wrath,
With blazing heath blockades the path ,
In dense and stifling volumes roll'd,
The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold !
The warrior-threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams, were heard in vain ,
The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires !
The bones which strew that cavern's gloom,
Too well attest then dismal doom 240

X

Merrily, merrily goes the bark
On a breeze from the northward free,
So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
Or the swan through the summer sea

The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
 And Ulva dark, and Colonsay,
 And all the group of islets gay
 That guard famed Staffa round
 Then all unknown its columns rose,
 Where dark and undisturb'd repose 250
 The cormorant had found,
 And the shy seal had quiet home,
 And welter'd in that wondrous dome,
 Where, as to shame the temples deck'd
 By skill of earthly architect,
 Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
 A Minster to her Maker's praise
 Not for a meaner use ascend
 Her columns, or her arches bend ,
 Nor of a theme less solemn tells 260
 That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,
 And still, between each awful pause,
 From the high vault an answer draws,
 In varied tone prolong'd and high,
 That mocks the organ's melody
 Nor doth its entrance front in vain
 To old Iona's holy fane,
 That Nature's voice might seem to say,
 " Well hast thou done, frail Child of clay !
 Thy humble powers that stately shrine 270
 Task'd high and hard—but witness mine ! "

XI

Merrily, merrily goes the bark—
 Before the gale she bounds ,
 So darts the dolphin from the shark,
 Or the deer before the hounds
 They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
 And they waken'd the men of the wild Three,
 And the Chief of the sandy Coll ,

They paused not at Columba's isle,
 Though peal'd the bells from the holy pile 280
 With long and measured toll,
 No time for matin or for mass,
 And the sounds of the holy summons pass
 Away in the billows' roll
 Lochbure's fierce and wulike Lord
 Their signal saw, and grasp'd his sword,
 And verdant Ilay call'd her host,
 And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
 Lord Ronald's call obey,
 And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore 290
 Still rings to Corrieveken's roar,
 And lonely Colonsay,
 —Scenes sung by him who sings no more!
 His bright and brief career is o'er,
 And mute his tuneful strains,
 Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
 That loved the light of song to pour,
 A distant and a deadly shore
 Has LEYDEN'S cold remains!

XII

Ever the breeze blows merrily, 300
 But the galley ploughs no more the sea
 Lest, rounding wild Cantyre, they meet
 The southern fœman's watchful fleet,
 They held unwonted way, —
 Up Taibut's western lake they bore,
 Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er,
 As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
 Upon the eastern bay
 It was a wondrous sight to see
 Topmast and pennon glitter free, 310
 High raised above the greenwood tree

As on dry land the galley moves,
 By cliff and copse and alder groves
 Deep import from that selcouth sign,
 Did many a mountain Seer divine,
 For ancient legends told the Gael,
 That when a royal bark should sail
 O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
 Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
 And every foe should faint and quail
 Before her silver Cross

320

XIII

Now launch'd once more, the inland sea
 They furrow with fair augury,
 And steer for Arian's isle,
 The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
 Ben-Ghoul, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
 Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
 And bade Loch Ranza smile
 Thither then destined course they drew,
 It seem'd the isle her monarch knew,
 So brilliant was the landward view,
 The ocean so serene,
 Each puny wave in diamonds roll'd
 O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
 With azure strove and green
 The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
 Glow'd with the tints of evening's hour,
 The beech was silver sheen,
 The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
 And, oft renew'd, seem'd oft to die,
 With breathless pause between
 O who, with speech of war and woes,
 Would wish to break the soft repose
 Of such enchanting scene !

330

340

XIV

Is it of wai Lord Ronald speaks ?
 The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
 The timid look and downcast eye,
 And faltering voice the theme deny
 And good King Robert's brow express'd,
 He ponder'd o'er some high request, 350
 As doubtful to approve ,
 Yet in his eye and lip the while,
 Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
 Which manhood's graver mood beguile,
 When lovers talk of love
 Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled ,
 —“And for my bride betrothed,” he said,
 “My Liege has heard the rumour spread
 Of Edith from Artoirish fled
 Too hard her fate—I claim no right 360
 To blame her for her hasty flight ,
 Be joy and happiness her lot !—
 But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
 And Lorn recall'd his promised plight,
 In the assembled chieftains' sight —
 When, to fulfil our fathers' band
 I proffer'd all I could—my hand—
 I was repulsed with scorn ,
 Mine honour I should ill assert,
 And worse the feelings of my heart, 370
 If I should play a suitor's part
 Again, to pleasure Lorn”—

XV

“Young Lord,” the Royal Bruce replied,
 “That question must the Church decide ,
 Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
 Edith takes Clifford for her mate,

The very tie, which she hath broke,
To thee should still be binding yoke
But, for my sister Isabel—
The mood of woman who can tell ? 380
I guess the Champion of the Rock,
Victorious in the tourney shock,
That knight unknown, to whom the prize
She dealt,—had favour in her eyes ,
But since our brother Nigel's fate,
Our ruin'd house and hapless state,
From worldly joy and hope estranged,
Much is the hapless mourner changed
Perchance," here smiled the noble King,
"This tale may other musings bring 390
Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
The little convent of Saint Bride ,
There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
Till fate shall give more prosperous day ,
And thither will I bear thy suit,
Nor will thine advocate be mute "

XVI

As thus they talk'd in earnest mood,
That speechless boy beside him stood
He stoop'd his head against the mast,
And bitter sobs came thick and fast, 400
A grief that would not be repress'd,
But seem'd to burst his youthful breast
His hands, against his forehead held,
As if by force his tears repell'd,
But through his fingers, long and slight,
Fast trill'd the drops of crystal bright
Edward, who walk'd the deck apart,
First spied this conflict of the heart
Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind , 410

By force the slender hand he drew
 From those pool eyes that stream'd with dew
 As in his hold the stripling strove—
 ('Twas a rough grasp, though meant in love)
 Away his tears the warrior swept,
 And bade shame on him that he wept
 "I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
 Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong"
 For, were he of our crew the best,
 The insult went not unredress'd 420
 Come, cheer thee, thou art now of age
 To be a warrior's gallant page,
 Thou shalt be mine!—a palfray fair
 O'er hill and holt my boy shall bear,
 To hold my bow in hunting grove,
 Or speed on errand to my love,
 For well I wot thou wilt not tell
 The temple where my wishes dwell"

XVII

Bruce interposed,—"Gay Edward, no,
 This is no youth to hold thy bow, 430
 To fill thy goblet, or to bear
 Thy message light to lighter fair
 Thou art a patron all too wild
 And thoughtless for this orphan child
 See'st thou not how apart he steals,
 Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals?
 Fitter by far in yon calm cell
 To tend our sister Isabel,
 With father Augustine to share
 The peaceful change of convent prayer, 440
 Than wander wild adventures through,
 With such a reckless guide as you"—
 "Thanks, brother!" Edward answer'd gay,
 "For the high laud thy words convey!"

But we may learn some future day,
 If thou or I can this poor boy
 Protect the best, or best employ
 Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand,
 Launch we the boat, and seek the land "

XVIII

To land King Robert lightly sprung, 450
 And thrice aloud his bugle rung
 With note prolong'd and varied strain,
 Till bold Ben-Ghoul replied again
 Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
 Had in a glen a hart at bay,
 And Lennox cheer'd the laggard hounds,
 When waked that horn the greenwood bounds
 ' It is the foe ! ' cried Boyd, who came
 In breathless haste with eye of flame,—
 " It is the foe !—Each valiant lord 460
 Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword !"—
 " Not so," replied the good Lord James,
 " That blast no English bugle claims
 Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
 Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight
 Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
 If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear !
 Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring,
 That blast was winded by the King ! "

XIX

Fast to their mates the tidings spread, 470
 And fast to shore the warriors sped
 Bursting from glen and greenwood tree,
 High waked their loyal jubilee !
 Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
 And clasp'd his hands, and wept aloud

Veterans of early fields were there,
 Whose helmets press'd their hoary hair,
 Whose swords and axes bore a stain
 From life-blood of the red-haired Dane ,
 And boys, whose hands scarce brook'd to wield 480
 The heavy sword or bossy shield
 Men too were there, that bore the scars
 Impress'd in Albyn's woeful wars,
 At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
 Teyndrum's dread rout, and Methven's flight
 The might of Douglas there was seen,
 There Lennox with his graceful mien ,
 Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded Knight ,
 The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light ,
 The Heir of murder'd De la Haye, 490
 And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay
 Around their King regain'd they press'd,
 Wept, shouted, clasp'd him to their breast,
 And young and old, and serf and lord,
 And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
 And he in many a peril tried,
 Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
 And live or die by Bruce's side !

XX

Oh, War ! thou hast thy fierce delight,
 Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright ! 500
 Such gleams, as from thy polish'd shield
 Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field !
 Such transports wake, severe and high,
 Amid the pealing conquest-cry ,
 Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
 Muster the remnants of a host,
 And as each comrade's name they tell,
 Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
 Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye,

Vow to avenge them or to die !— 510
 Warriors !—and where are warriors found,
 If not on martial Britain's ground ?
 And who, when waked with note of fire,
 Love more than they the British lyre ?—
 Know ye not,—hearts to honour dear !
 That joy, deep thrilling, stern, severe,
 At which the heartstrings vibrate high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye ?
 And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
 Of tear is on his manly face, 520
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hail'd at Scone his early reign,
 This patriot band around him hung,
 And to his knees and bosom clung ?—
 Blame ye the Bruce ?—His brother blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while ashamed,
 With haughty laugh his head he turn'd,
 And dash'd away the tear he scorn'd

XXI

'Tis morning, and the Convent bell
 Long time had ceased its matin knell, 530
 Within thy walls, Saint Bride !
 An aged Sister sought the cell
 Assign'd to Lady Isabel,
 And hurriedly she cried
 " Haste, gentle Lady, haste !—there waits
 A noble stranger at the gates ,
 Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has seen
 A Knight of such a princely mien ,
 His errand, as he bade me tell,
 Is with the Lady Isabel " 540
 The princess rose,—for on her knee
 Low bent she told her rosary,—
 " Let him by thee his purpose teach ,

I may not give a stranger speech"—
 "Saint Bride forefend, thou royal Maid ' '
 The portress cross'd herself, and said,—
 "Not to be Princess might I
 Debate his will, his suit deny"—
 "Has earthly show, then, simple fool,
 Power o'er a sister of thy rule ? 550
 And art thou, like the worldly train,
 Subdued by splendours light and vain ?"—

LXII

"No, Lady ' in old eyes like mine,
 Gauds have no glitter, gems no shine ,
 Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
 One youthful page is all his train
 It is the form, the eye, the word,
 The bearing of that stranger Lord ,
 His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
 Built like a castle's battled wall, 560
 Yet moulded in such just degrees,
 His giant-strength seems lightsome ease
 Close as the tendrils of the vine
 His locks upon his forehead twine,
 Jet black, save where some touch of gray
 Has ta'en the youthful hue away
 Weather and war their rougher trace
 Have left on that majestic face ,— "
 But 'tis his dignity of eye '
 There, if a suppliant, would I fly, 570
 Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
 Of sympathy, redress, relief—
 That glance if guilty, would I dread
 More than the doom that spoke me dead '"—
 "Enough, enough," the Princess cried,
 "'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her pride '
 To meaner front was ne'er assign'd

Such mastery o'er the common mind—
 Bestow'd thy high designs to aid,
 How long, O Heaven ! how long delay'd ! - 580
 Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
 My darling brother, Royal Bruce ! ”

XXIII

They met like friends who part in pain,
 And meet in doubtful hope again
 But when subdued that fitful swell,
 The Bruce survey'd the humble cell,—
 “ And this is thine, poor Isabel !—
 That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
 For room of state, and bed of pall ,
 For costly robes and jewels rare, 590
 A string of beads and zone of hair ,
 And for the trumpet's sprightly call
 To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
 The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
 ’Twixt hours of penitence and prayer !—
 O ill for thee, my royal claim
 From the First David's sainted name !
 O woe for thee, that while he sought
 His right, thy brother feebly fought ! ”—

XXIV

“ Now lay these vain regrets aside, 600
 And be the unshaken Bruce ! ” she cried
 “ For more I glory to have shared
 The woes thy venturous spirit dared,
 When raising first thy valiant band
 In rescue of thy native land,
 Than had fair Fortune set me down
 The partner of an emper's crown
 And grieve not that on Pleasure's stream
 No more I dived in giddy dream,

For Heaven the erring pilot knew, 610
 And from the gulf the vessel drew,
 Tried me with judgments stern and great,
 My house's ruin, thy defeat,
 Poor Nigel's death, till, tamed, I own,
 My hopes are fix'd on Heaven alone,
 Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
 My heart to this vain world of sin"—

XXV

"Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice,
 First wilt thou wait thy brother's voice,
 Then ponder if in convent scene 620
 No softer thoughts might intervene—
 Say they were of that unknown Knight,
 Victor in Woodstock's tourney-fight—
 Nay, if his name such blush you owe,
 Victorious o'er a fairer foe!"
 Truly his penetrating eye
 Hath caught that blush's passing dye,—
 Like the last beam of evening thrown
 On a white cloud,—just seen and gone
 Soon with calm cheek and steady eye, 630
 The Princess made composed reply—
 "I guess my brother's meaning well,
 For not so silent is the cell,
 But we have heard the islesmen all
 Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
 And mine eye proves that Knight unknown
 And the brave Island Lord are one—
 Had then his suit been earlier made,
 In his own name, with thee to aid,
 (But that his plighted faith forbade,) 640
 I know not But thy page so near?
 This is no tale for menial's ear"

XXVI

Still stood that page, as far apart
 As the small cell would space afford ,
 With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
 He leant his weight on Bruce's sword,
 The monarch's mantle too he bore,
 And drew the fold his visage o'er
 " Fear not for him—in murderous strife,"
 Said Bruce, " his warning saved my life , 650
 Full seldom parts he from my side,
 And in his silence I confide,
 Since he can tell no tale again
 He is a boy of gentle strain,
 And I have purposed he shall dwell
 In Augustine the chaplain's cell,
 And wait on thee, my Isabel —
 Mind not his tears , I've seen them flow,
 As in the thaw dissolves the snow
 'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful, 660
 Unfit against the tide to pull
 And those that with the Bruce would sail,
 Must learn to strive with stream and gale
 But forward, gentle Isabel—
 My answer for Lord Ronald tell "—

XXVII

" This answer be to Ronald given—
 The heart he asks is fix'd on heaven
 My love was like a summer flower,
 That wither'd in the wintry hour,
 Born but of vanity and pride, 670
 And with these sunny visions died,
 If further press his suit—then say,
 He should his plighted troth obey,
 Troth plighted both with ring and word,
 And sworn on crucifix and sword —

Oh, shame thee, Robert ! I have seen
 Thou hast a woman's guardian been !
 Even in extremity's dread hour,
 When press'd on thee the Southern power,
 And safety, to all human sight, 680
 Was only found in rapid flight,
 Thou heard'st a wretched female plain
 In agony of travail-pain,
 And thou didst bid thy little band
 Upon the instant turn and stand,
 And dare the worst the foe might do,
 Rather than, like a knight untrue,
 Leave to pursuers merciless
 A woman in her last distress —
 And wilt thou now deny thine aid 690
 To an oppress'd and injured maid,
 Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
 And press his fickle faith on me ?—
 So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
 Had I those earthly feelings now,
 Which could my former bosom move
 Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
 Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract both, 700
 And fair acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
 The ill-requested Maid of Loyn ! ”

XXVIII

With sudden impulse forward sprung
 The page, and on her neck he hung ,
 Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stoop'd, and bent his knee,
 Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell —

The Princess, loosen'd from his hold, 710
Blush'd angry at his bearing bold ,
 But good King Robert cried,
" Chafe not —by signs he speaks his mind,
He heard the plan my care design'd,
 Nor could his transports hide —
But, sister, now bethink thee well ,
No easy choice the convent cell ,
Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
Either to force thy hand or heart,
Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn, 720
Or wrong for thee, the Maid of Lorn
But think,—not long the time has been,
That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
And would'st the ditties best approve,
That told some lay of hapless love
Now are thy wishes in thy power,
And thou art bent on cloister bower !
O ! if our Edward knew the change,
How would his busy satire range,
With many a sarcasm varied still 730
On woman's wish, and woman's will !"—

XXIX

" Brother, I well believe," she said,
" Even so would Edward's part be play'd
Kindly in heart, in word severe,
A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
He holds his humour uncontroll'd ,
But thou art of another mould
Say then to Ronald, as I say,
Unless before my feet he lay
The ring which bound the faith he swore, 740
By Edith freely yielded o'er,
He moves his suit to me no more

Nor do I promise, even if now
 He stood absolved of spousal vow,
 That I would change my purpose made,
 To shelter me in holy shade —
 Brother, for little space, farewell !
 To other duties wains the bell ”—

xxx

“ Lost to the world,” King Robert said,
 When he had left the royal maid, 750
 “ Lost to the world by lot severe,
 O what a gem lies buried here,
 Nipp’d by misfortune’s cruel frost,
 The buds of fair affection lost ! —
 But what have I with love to do ?
 Far sterner cares my lot pursue
 —Pent in this isle we may not lie,
 Nor would it long our wants supply
 Right opposite, the mainland towers
 Of my own Turnberry court our powers— 760
 —Might not my father’s beadsman hoar,
 Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
 Kindle a signal-flame, to show
 The time propitious for the blow ?
 It shall be so—some friend shall bear
 Our mandate with despatch and care,
 —Edward shall find the messenger
 That fortress ours, the island fleet
 May on the coast of Carrick meet —
 O Scotland ! shall it e’er be mine 770
 To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
 To raise my victor-head, and see
 Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free,—
 That glance of bliss is all I crave,
 Betwixt my labours and my grave ! ”

Then down the hill he slowly went,
Oft pausing on the steep descent,
And reach'd the spot where his bold train
Held rustic camp upon the plain

CANTO FIFTH

I

ON fair Loch Ranza stream'd the early day,
Thin wreaths of cottage smoke are upward curl'd
From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
And circling mountains sever from the world
And there the fisherman his sail unfurl'd,
The goat-herd drew his kids to steep Ben-Ghoil,
Before the hut the dame her spindle twirl'd,
Counting the sunbeam as she plied her toil —
For, wake where'er he may, Man wakes to care and coil

But other duties call'd each convent maid, 10
Roused by the summons of the moss-grown bell,
Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
And every sister sought her separate cell,
Such was the rule, her rosary to tell
And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer,
The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
As stoop'd her gentle head in meek devotion there

II

She raised her eyes, that duty done,
When glanced upon the pavement-stone, 20
Gemmed and enchased, a golden ring,
Bound to a scroll with silken string,

With few brief words inscribed to tell,
 "This for the Lady Isabel"
 Within, the writing farther bore,—
 "'Twas with this ring his plight he swore,
 With this his promise I restore,
 To her who can the heart command,
 Well may I yield the plighted hand
 And O! for better fortune born,
 Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
 Her who was Edith once of Loyn!"
 One single flash of glad surprise
 Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
 But vanish'd in the blush of shame,
 That, as its penance, instant came
 "O thought unworthy of my race!
 Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
 A moment's throb of joy to own,
 That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown!"
 Thou pledge of vows, too well believed,
 Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
 Think not thy lustre here shall gain
 Another heart to hope in vain!
 For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,
 Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
 And worldly splendours sink debased"
 Then by the cross the ring she placed

III

Next rose the thought, —its owner far,
 How came it here through bolt and bar?—
 But the dim lattice is ajar —
 She looks abroad,—the morning dew
 A light short step had brush'd anew,
 And there were footprints seen
 On the carved buttress rising still,

Till on the mossy window-sill

Then track effaced the green

The ivy twigs were torn and fray'd,

As if some climber's steps to aid —

But who the hardy messenger,

60

Whose venturous path these signs infer ?—

Strange doubts are mine !—Mona, draw nigh .

—Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—

What strangers, gentle mother, say,

Have sought these holy walls to-day ?”

“None, Lady, none of note or name

Only your brother's foot-page came,

At peep of dawn—I pray'd him pass

To chapel where they said the mass ,

But like an arrow he shot by,

70

And tears seem'd bursting from his eye”

IV

The truth at once on Isabel,

As darted by a sunbeam fell

“’Tis Edith's self !—her speechless woe,

Her form, her looks, the secret show !

—Instant, good Mona, to the bay,

And to my royal brother say,

I do conjure him seek my cell,

With that mute page he loves so well”—

“What ! know'st thou not his wail-like host

80

At break of day has left our coast ?

My old eyes saw them from the tower

At eve they couch'd in greenwood bowel,

At dawn a bugle signal, made

By their bold Lord, their ranks array'd ,

Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,

No time for benediction !”

Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,

Just shake the dewdrops from their hair,

And toss their armed crests aloft, 90
 Such matins then ! — “ Good mother, soft—
 Where does my brother bend his way ? ” —
 “ As I have heard, for Brodick Bay,
 Across the isle—of barks a score
 Lie there, ’tis said, to waft them o’er,
 On sudden news, to Cairick-shore ” —
 “ If such then purpose, deep the need,”
 Said anxious Isabel, “ of speed !
 Call Father Augustine, good dame ” —
 The nun obey’d, the Father came 100

v

“ Kind Father, hie without delay,
 Across the hills to Brodick Bay
 This message to the Bruce be given,
 I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
 That, till he speak with me, he stay !
 Or, if his haste brook no delay,
 That he deliver, on my suit,
 Into thy charge that stupling mute
 Thus plays his sister Isabel,
 For causes more than she may tell— 110
 Away, good Father ! and take heed,
 That life and death are on thy speed ”
 His cowl the good old priest did on,
 Took his pikéd staff and sandall’d shoon,
 And, like a palmer bent by eld,
 O’er moss and moor his journey held

vi

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
 And rugged was the pilgrimage,
 But none was there beside, whose care
 Might such important message bear 120

Through buchen copse he wander'd slow,
 Stunted and sapless, thin and low ,
 By many a mountain stream he pass'd,
 From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
 Dashing to foam their waters dun,
 And sparkling in the summer sun
 Round his grey head the wild curlew
 In many a fearless circle flew
 O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
 Craved wavy eye and ample stride , 130
 He cross'd his brow beside the stone,
 Where Druids erst heard victims groan,
 And at the cairns upon the wild,
 O'er many a heathen hero piled,
 He breathed a timid prayer for those
 Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose
 Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
 There told his hours within the shade,
 And at the stream his thirst allay'd
 Thence onward journeying slowly still, 140
 As evening closed he reach'd the hill,
 Where, rising through the woodland green,
 Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen,
 From Hastings, late their English lord,
 Douglas had won them by the sword
 The sun that sunk behind the isle,
 Now tinged them with a parting smile

VII

But though the beams of light decay,
 'Twas bustle all in Brodick Bay
 The Bruce's followers crowd the shore, 150
 And boats and barges some unmoor,
 Some raise the sail, some seize the oar ,
 Then eyes oft turn'd where glimmer'd far
 What might have seem'd an early star

On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
Was all too flickering, fierce, and bright
Far distant in the south, the ray
Shone pale amid retiring day,
But as, on Carrick shore,
Dim seen in outline faintly blue, 160
The shades of evening closer drew,
It kindled more and more
The monk's slow steps now press the sands,
And now amid a scene he stands
Full strange to churchman's eye,
Warriors, who, arming for the fight,
Rivet and clasp their harness light,
And twinkling spears, and axes bright,
And helmets flashing high
Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears, 170
A language much unmeet he hears,
While, hastening all on board,
As stormy as the swelling surge
That mix'd its roar, the leaders urge
Their followers to the ocean verge,
With many a haughty word

VIII

Through that wild throng the Father pass'd,
And reach'd the Royal Bruce at last
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float, 180
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave,
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,
And loosen'd in his sheath his brand
Edward and Lennox were at hand,
Douglas and Ronald had the care

The soldiers to the barks to share —
 The Monk approach'd and homage paid ,
 "And art thou come," King Robert said, 190
 "So far to bless us ere we part ?"—
 —"My Liege, and with a loyal heart !—
 But other charge I have to tell,"—
 And spoke the hest of Isabel
 —"Now by Saint Giles," the Monarch cried,
 "This moves me much !—this morning tide,
 I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
 With my commandment there to bide "
 —"Thither he came, the portress show'd,
 But there, my Liege, made brief abode"— 200

IX

"'Twas I," said Edward, "found employ
 Of nobler import for the boy
 Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
 A fitting messenger to find,
 To bear thy written mandate o'er
 To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
 I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
 The chapel gate to snatch a mass
 I found the stripling on a tomb 210
 Low-seated, weeping for the doom
 That gave his youth to convent gloom
 I told my purpose, and his eyes
 Flash'd joyful at the glad surprise
 He bounded to the skiff, the sail
 Was spread before a prosperous gale,
 And well my charge he hath obeyed ,
 For, see ! the ruddy signal made,
 That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
 Guards carelessly our father's hall,"—

X

"O wild of thought, and hard of heart!" 220
 Answer'd the Monarch, "on a part
 Of such deep danger to employ
 A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
 Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
 Without a tongue to plead for life!
 Now, were my right restored by Heaven,
 Edward, my crown I would have given,
 Ere thrust on such adventure wild,
 I perill'd thus the helpless child"—
 —Offended half, and half submiss,— 230
 "Brother and Liege, of blame like this,"
 Edward replied, "I little dream'd
 A stranger messenger, I deem'd,
 Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
 Where all thy squires are known so well
 Noteless his presence, sharp his sense,
 His imperfection his defence
 If seen, none can his errand guess,
 If ta'en, his words no tale express—
 Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shine 240
 Might expiate greater fault than mine"—
 'Rash," said King Robert, "was the deed—
 But it is done—Embark with speed!"—
 Good Father, say to Isabel
 How this unhappy chance befell
 If well we thrive on yonder shore,
 Soon shall my care her page restore
 Our greeting to our sister bear,
 And think of us in mass and prayer"

XI

"Aye!"—said the Priest, "while this poor hand 250
 Can chalice raise or cross command,

While my old voice has accents' use,
 Can Augustine forget the Bruce ! ”
 Then to his side Lord Ronald press'd,
 And whisper'd, “ Bear thou this request,
 That when by Bruce's side I fight,
 For Scotland's crown and Freedom's right,
 The princess grace her knight to bear
 Some token of her favouring care ,
 It shall be shown where England's best 260
 May shrink to see it on my crest
 And for the boy—since weightier care
 For Royal Bruce the times prepare,
 The helpless youth is Ronald's charge,
 His couch my plaid, his fence my target ”
 He ceased for many an eager hand
 Had urged the barges from the strand
 Their number was a score and ten,
 They bore thence threescore chosen men
 With such small force did Bruce at last 270
 The die for death or empire cast !

XII

Now on the darkening main afloat,
 Ready and mann'd rocks every boat,
 Beneath their oars the ocean's might
 Was dash'd to sparks of glimmering light
 Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
 Their armour glanced against the shore,
 And, mingled with the dashing tide,
 Their murmuring voices distant died —
 “ God speed them ! ” said the Priest, as dark 280
 On distant billows glides each bark ,
 “ O Heaven ! when swords for freedom shine,
 And monarch's right, the cause is thine !
 Edge doubly every patriot blow !
 Beat down the banners of the foe !

And be it to the nations known,
 That Victory is from God alone ! ”
 As up the hill his path he drew,
 He turn'd, his blessings to renew,
 Oft turn'd, till on the darken'd coast
 All traces of their course were lost , 290
 Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
 To shelter for the evening hour

XIII

In night the fairy prospects sink,
 Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
 Close the fair entrance of the Clyde ,
 The woods of Bute, no more descried,
 Are gone—and on the placid sea
 The rowers ply their task with glee,
 While hands that knightly lances bore 300
 Impatient aid the labouring oar
 The half-faced moon shone dim and pale,
 And glanced against the whiten'd sail ,
 But on that ruddy beacon-light
 Each steersman kept the helm aight,
 And oft, for such the King's command,
 That all at once might reach the strand,
 From boat to boat loud shout and hail
 Warn'd them to crowd or slacken sail
 South and by west the armada bore 310
 And near at length the Carrick shore
 As less and less the distance grows,
 High and more high the beacon rose ,
 The light, that seem'd a twinkling star,
 Now blazed portentous, fierce, and fair
 Dark-red the heaven above it glow'd,
 Dark-red the sea beneath it flow'd,
 Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
 In blood red light her islets swim ,

Wild scream the dazzled sea fowl gave, 320
 Dropp'd from their crags on plashing wave
 The deer to distant covert drew,
 The black-cock deem'd it day, and crew
 Like some tall castle given to flame,
 O'er half the land the lustre came
 "Now, good my Liege, and brother sage,
 What think ye of mine elfin page?"—
 "Row on!" the noble King replied,
 "We'll learn the truth whatever betide,
 Yet sure the beadsman and the child 330
 Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild"

XIV

With that the boats approach'd the land,
 But Edward's grounded on the sand,
 The eager Knight leap'd in the sea
 Waist-deep and first on shore was he,
 Though every barge's hardy band
 Contended which should gain the land,
 When that strange light, which, seen afar,
 Seem'd steady as the polar star,
 Now, like a prophet's fiery chan, 340
 Seem'd travelling the realms of air
 Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,
 As that portentous meteor rose,
 Helm, axe, and falchion glitter'd bright,
 And in the red and dusky light
 His comrade's face each warrior saw,
 Nor marvell'd it was pale with awe
 Then high in air the beams were lost,
 And darkness sunk upon the coast—
 Ronald to Heaven a prayer address'd, 350
 And Douglas cross'd his dauntless breast,
 "Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried,
 But reckless Edward spoke aside,

"Deem'st thou, Kinkpatrick, in that flame
 Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
 Or would thy dauntless heart endure
 Once more to make assurance sure?"—
 "Hush!" said the Bruce, "we soon shall know,
 If this be sorcerer's empty show,
 Or stratagem of southern foe 360
 The moon shines out—upon the sand
 Let every leader rank his band"

XV

Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
 That ruddy light's unnatural dye,
 The dubious cold reflection lay
 On the wet sands and quiet bay
 Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
 His scatter'd files to order due,
 Till shield compact and serried spear
 In the cool light shone blue and clear 370
 Then down a path that sought the tide,
 That speechless page was seen to glide,
 He knelt him lowly on the sand,
 And gave a scroll to Robert's hand
 "A torch," the Monarch cried, "What, ho!
 Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know"
 But evil news the letters bare,
 The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
 Augmented, too, that very morn,
 By mountaineers who came with Loyn 380
 Long harrow'd by oppressor's hand,
 Courage and faith had fled the land,
 And over Carrick, dark and deep,
 Had sunk dejection's iron sleep—
 Cuthbert had seen that beacon flame,
 Unwitting from what source it came

Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore 390

XVI

As round the torch the leaders crowd,
Bruce read these chilling news aloud
"What council, nobles, have we now ?—
To ambush us in greenwood bough,
And take the chance which fate may send
To bring our enterprise to end ?
Or shall we turn us to the main
As exiles, and embark again ?"—
Answer'd fierce Edward, "Hap what may,
In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must stay 400
I would not minstrels told the tale,
Wildfire or meteor made us quail"
Answer'd the Douglas—"If my Liege
May win yon walls by storm or siege,
Then were each brave and patriot heart
Kindled of new for loyal part"—
Answer'd Lord Ronald, "Not for shame
Would I that aged Torquil came,
And found, for all our empty boast,
Without a blow we fled the coast 410
I will not credit that this land,
So famed for warlike heart and hand,
The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a truce"—
"Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll bide !"
So Boyd and Haye and Lennox cried,
So said, so vow'd, the leaders all,
So Bruce resolved "And in my hall
Since the Bold Southern make their home,
The hour of payment soon shall come, 420

When with a rough and rugged host
 Clifford may reckon to his cost
 Meantime, through well-known bosk and dell,
 I'll lead where we may shelter well "

XVII

Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
 Whose fairy glow beguil'd then sight '—
 It ne'er was known—yet grey-hair'd eld
 A superstitious credence held,
 That never did a mortal hand
 Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand , 430
 Nay, and that on the self-same night
 When Bruce cross'd o'er, still gleams the light
 Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
 And glittering wave and crimson'd shore—
 But whether beam celestial, lent
 By Heaven to aid the King's descent,
 Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
 To lure him to defeat and death,
 Or were it but some meteor strange,
 Of such as oft through midnight range, 440
 Startling the traveller late and lone,
 I know not—and it ne'er was known

XVIII

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
 And Ronald, to his promise true,
 Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
 To aid him on the rugged way
 "Now cheer thee, simple Amadine !
 Why throbs that silly heart of thine ?"—
 —That name the pirates to their slave
 (In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling) gave— 450
 "Dost thou not rest thee on my arm ?
 Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm ?

Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
 This targe for thee and me supplied ?
 Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel ?
 And, trembler, canst thou terror feel ?
 Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart ,
 From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part "
 —O ! many a shaft, at random sent,
 Finds mark the archer little meant ' 460
 And many a word, at random spoken,
 May soothe or wound a heart that's broken !
 Half sooth'd, half grieved, half terrified,
 Close drew the page to Ronald's side ,
 A wild delirious thrill of joy
 Was in that hour of agony,
 As up the steepy pass he strove,
 Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love

XIX

The banner of that non shore,
 The rock's steep ledge, is now climb'd o'er , 470
 And from the castle's distant wall,
 From tower to tower the warders call
 The sound swings over land and sea,
 And marks a watchful enemy —
 They gain'd the Chase, a wide domain
 Left for the castle's silvan reign,
 (Seek not the scene—the axe, the plough,
 The boor's dull fence, have marr'd it now)
 But then, soft swept in velvet green
 The plain with many a glade between, 480
 Whose tangled alleys far invade
 The depth of the brown forest shade
 Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
 Fair shelter for the sportive fawn ,
 There, tufted close with copsewood green,
 Was many a swelling hillock seen ,

And all around was verdure meet
 For pressure of the fairies' feet
 The glossy holly loved the park,
 The yew-tree lent its shadow dark, 490
 And many an old oak, worn and bare,
 With all its shiver'd boughs, was there
 Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
 On lawn and hillock, glade and dell
 The gallant Monarch sigh'd to see
 These glades so loved in childhood free,
 Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
 He ranged beneath the forest bough

XX

Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they sped
 Well knew the band that measured tread, 500
 When, in retreat or in advance,
 The serried warriors move at once,
 And evil were the luck, if dawn
 Descried them on the open lawn
 Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
 Strain up the bank and o'er the moss
 From the exhausted page's brow
 Cold drops of toil are streaming now,
 With effort faint and lengthen'd pause,
 His weary step the stripling draws 510
 "Nay, droop not yet!" the warrior said,
 "Come, let me give thee ease and aid!
 Strong are mine arms, and little care
 A weight so slight as thine to bear—
 What! wilt thou not?—capricious boy!—
 Then thine own limbs and strength employ
 Pass but this night, and pass thy care,
 I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel!" 520

Worn out, dishearten'd, and dismay'd,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid ,
 His trembling limbs then aid refuse,
 He sunk among the midnight dews !

XXI

What may be done ?—the night is gone—
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—
 Eternal shame, if at the brunt
 Lord Ronald grace not battle's front !—
 "See yonder oak, within whose trunk
 Decay a darken'd cell hath sunk ,
 Enter, and rest thee there a space,
 Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face
 I will not be, believe me, far ,
 But must not quit the ranks of war
 Well will I mark the bosky bourn,
 And soon, to guard thee hence, return —
 Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy !
 But sleep in peace, and wake in joy "
 In silvan lodging close bestow'd,
 He placed the page, and onward stode
 With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
 And soon the marching band o'ertook

530

540

XXII

Thus strangely left, long sobb'd and wept
 The page, till, wearied out, he slept—
 A rough voice waked his dream—"Nay, here,
 Here by this thicket, pass'd the deer—
 Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
 What have we here ?—A Scottish plaid,
 And in its folds a stripling laid ?—
 Come forth ! thy name and business tell !
 What, silent ?—then I guess thee well,
 The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,

550

Wafted from Airan yester morn —
Come, comrades, we will straight return
Our Lord may choose the lack should teach
To this young lurcher use of speech
Thy bow-string, till I bind him fast —
“Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast,
Unbound we’ll lead him, fear it not,
’Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot” 560
The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led

XXIII

Stout Clifford in the castle court
Prepared him for the morning sport,
And now with Loyn held deep discourse,
Now gave command for hound and horse
War-steeds and palfreys paw’d the ground,
And many a deer-dog howl’d around
To Amadine, Lorn’s well-known word
Replying to that Southern Lord, 570
Mix’d with this clanging din, might seem
The phantasm of a fever’d dream
The tone upon his ringing ears
Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
When in rude waves or roaring winds
Some words of woe the muser finds,
Until more loudly and more near,
Their speech arrests the page’s ear

XXIV

“And was she thus,” said Clifford, “lost?
The priest should rue it to his cost!” 580
What says the monk?” — “The holy Sire
Owns, that in masquer’s quaint attire,
She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
To all except to him alone

But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
 Laid them aboard that very morn,
 And pirates seized her for their prey,
 He proffer'd ransom-gold to pay,
 And they agreed—but ere told o'er,
 The winds blow loud, the billows roar ,
 They sever'd, and they met no more
 He deems—such tempests vex'd the coast
 Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost
 So let it be, with the disgrace
 And scandal of her lofty race
 Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
 Than brought her infamy on Lorn ! ”

XXV

Lord Clifford now the captive spied,—
 “ Whom, Herbert, hast thou there ? ” he cried
 “ A spy we seized within the Chase,
 A hollow oak his lurking place ”—
 ‘ What tidings can the youth afford ? ’—
 “ He plays the mute ”—“ Then noose a cord—
 Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
 For his plaid's sake ”—“ Clan Colla's loom,”
 Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
 Rather the vesture than the face,
 “ Clan Colla's dames such tartans twine ,
 Wear or not plaid claims care of mine
 Give him, if my advice you crave,
 His own scathed oak , and let him wave
 In an, unless, by terror wrung,
 A frank confession find his tongue—
 Nor shall he die without his rite ,
 —Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
 And give Clan Colla's dirge thy breath,
 As they convey him to his death ”—

600

610

“O brother ! cruel to the last !”
 Though the poor captive’s bosom pass’d
 The thought, but, to his purpose true, 620
 He said not, though he sigh’d ‘ Adieu !”

XXVI

And will he keep his purpose still,
 In sight of that last closing ill,
 When one poor breath, one single word,
 May freedom, safety, life, afford ?
 Can he resist the instinctive call,
 For life that bids us barter all ?—
 Love, strong as death, his heart hath steel’d,
 His nerves hath strung—he will not yield !
 Since that poor breath, that little word, 630
 May yield Lord Ronald to the sword —
 Clan-Colla’s dirge is pealing wide,
 The griesly headsman’s by his side ,
 Along the greenwood Chase they bend,
 And now their march has ghastly end !
 That old and shatter’d oak beneath,
 They destine for the place of death
 —What thoughts are his, while all in vain
 His eye for aid explores the plain ?
 What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear, 640
 He hears the death-prayer mutter’d near ?
 And must he die such death accurst,
 Or will that bosom-secret burst ?
 Cold on his brow breaks terror’s dew,
 His trembling lips are livid blue ,
 The agony of parting life
 Has nought to match that moment’s strife !

XXVII

But other witnesses are nigh,
 Who mock at fear, and death defy !

Soon as the dire lament was play'd, 650
It waked the lurking ambuscade
The Island Lord look'd forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,—
“ By Heaven, they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony !
They shall abye it ! ”—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, “ They shall not harm
A ringlet of the stripling's hair ,
But, till I give the word, forbear
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force 660
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyeis and their hold
A spear above the copse display'd,
Be signal of the ambush made
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate,
And, when thou hear'st the battle-din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the port, 670
And man and guard the castle court —
The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see ”

XXVIII

Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compell'd to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood bough,
Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue — 680
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
Sees the dark death train moving by,

And heedful measures oft the space
 The Douglas and his band must trace,
 Ere they can reach their destined ground
 Now sinks the dunge's wailing sound,
 Now cluster round the direful tree
 That slow and solemn company,
 While hymn mistuned and mutter'd prayer
 The victim for his fate prepare — 690
 What glances o'er the greenwood shade ?
 The spear that marks the ambuscade !—
 "Now, noble Chief ! I leave thee loose
 Upon them, Ronald !" said the Bruce

XXIX

"The Bruce ! the Bruce !" to well-known cry
 His native rocks and woods reply
 "The Bruce ! the Bruce !" in that dread word
 The knell of hundred deaths was heard
 The astonish'd Southern gazed at first, 700
 Where the wild tempest was to burst
 That waked in that presaging name
 Before, behind, around it came !
 Half aim'd, surprised, on every side
 Hemm'd in, hew'd down, they bled and died
 Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
 And fierce Clan Colla's broadsword raged !
 Full soon the few who fought were sped,
 Nor better was their lot who fled,
 And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
 The Douglas's redoubted spear ! 710
 Two hundred yeomen on that moor
 The castle left, and none return

XXX

Not on their flight press'd Ronald's brand,
 A gentler duty claim'd his hand

He raised the page, where on the plain
 His fear had sunk him with the slain
 And twice, that morn, surprise well near
 Betray'd the secret kept by fear ,
 Once, when, with life retuning, came
 To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name, 720
 And hardly recollection drown'd
 The accents in a murmuring sound ,
 And once, when scarce he could resist
 The Chieftain's care to loose the vest,
 Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breast
 But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
 For martial work was yet to do

XXXI

A harder task fierce Edward waits
 Ere signal given, the castle gates
 His fury had assail'd , 730
 Such was his wonted reckless mood,
 Yet desperate valour oft made good,
 Even by its daring, venture rude,
 Where prudence might have fail'd
 Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
 And struck the iron chain in two,
 By which its planks arose ,
 The warder next his axe's edge
 Struck down upon the threshold ledge,
 'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge ! 740
 The gate they may not close
 Well fought the Southern in the fray,
 Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
 But stubborn Edward forced his way
 Against a hundred foes
 Loud came the cry, "The Bruce ! the Bruce !" ²
 No hope or in defence or truce,—
 Fresh combatants pour in ,

Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
 They drive the struggling foe before, 750
 And ward on ward they win
 Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
 And limbs were lopp'd, and life-blood pour'd,
 The cry of death and conflict roar'd,
 And fearful was the din !
 The startling horses plunged and flung,
 Clamour'd the dogs till turrets rung,
 Nor sunk the fearful cry,
 Till not a foeman was there found
 Alive, save those who on the ground 760
 Groan'd in their agony !

XXXII

The valiant Clifford is no more ,
 On Ronald's broadsword stream'd his gore
 But better hap had he of Lorn,
 Who, by the foeman backward borne,
 Yet gain'd with slender train the port,
 Where lay his bairn beneath the fort,
 And cut the cable loose
 Short were his shrift in that debate,
 That hour of fury and of fate, 770
 If Lorn encounter'd Bruce !
 Then long and loud the victor shout
 From turret and from tower rung out,
 The rugged vaults replied ,
 And from the donjon tower on high,
 The men of Carrick may descry
 Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
 Of silver, waving wide !

XXXIII

The Bruce hath won his father's hall !
 —“ Welcome, brave friends and comrades all, 780

Welcome to mirth and joy !
 The first, the last, is welcome here,
 From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,

To this poor speechless boy
 Great God ! once more my sire's abode
 Is mine—behold the floor I trode

In tottering infancy !
 And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
 Echoed my joyous shout and bound
 In boyhood, and that rung around

790

To youth's unthinking glee !
 O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
 Then to my friends, my thanks be given !"—
 He paused a space, his brow he cross'd—
 Then on the board his sword he toss'd,
 Yet steaming hot, with Southern gore
 From hilt to point 'twas crimson'd o'er

XXXIV

"Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,
 My noble fathers loved of yore
 Thrice let them circle round the board,
 The pledge, fair Scotland's rights restored !
 And he whose lip shall touch the wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at naught,
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot !
 Sit, gentle friends ! our hour of glee
 Is brief, we'll spend it joyously !
 Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,
 When betwixt storm and storm he gleams
 Well is our country's work begun,
 But more, far more, must yet be done

800

810

Speed messengers the country through ,
 Arouse old friends, and gather new ,
 Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
 Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
 Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
 The fairest forms, the truest hearts '
 Call all, call all ' from Reeds-wair-Path, 820
 To the wild confines of Cape-Wiath ,
 Wide let the news through Scotland ring,—
 The Northern Eagle claps his wing ' "

CANTO SIXTH

I

O who, that shared them, ever shall forget
 The emotions of the spirit rousing time,
 When breathless in the mart the couriers met,
 Early and late, at evening and at prime ,
 When the loud cannon and the merry chime
 Hail'd news on news, as field on field was won,
 When Hope, long doubtful, soar'd at length sublime,
 And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
 Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun ' "

O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid 10
 A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears '
 The heart-sick faintness of the hope delay'd,
 The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears,
 That track'd with terror twenty rolling years,
 All was forgot in that blithe jubilee '
 Her downcast eye even pale Affliction rears,
 To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee,
 That hail'd the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty ' "

Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
 When 'gainst the invaders turn'd the battle's scale, 20
 When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd
 O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale,
 When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale,
 And fiery Edward routed stout St John,
 When Randolph's warrior swell'd the southern gale,
 And many a fortress, town, and tower, was won,
 And fame still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done

II

Blithe tidings flew from baron's tower,
 To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,
 And waked the solitary cell, 30
 Where lone Saint Bride's recluses dwell
 Princess no more, fair Isabel,
 A votress of the order now,
 Say, did the rule that bid thee wear
 Dim veil and woollen scapulae,
 And reft thy locks of dark-brown hair,
 That stern and rigid vow,
 Did it condemn the transport high,
 Which glisten'd in thy watery eye,
 When minstrel or when palmer told 40
 Each fresh exploit of Bruce the bold ?—
 And whose the lovely form, that shares
 Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers ?
 No sister she of convent shade,
 So say these locks no lengthen'd braid,
 So say the blushes and the sighs,
 The tremors that unbidden rise,
 When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
 The brave Lord Ronald's praises came

III.

Believe, his father's castle won, 50
 And his bold enterprise begun,

That Bruce's earliest cares restore
 The speechless page to Allan's shore
 Nor think that long the quaint disguise
 Conceal'd her from a sister's eyes ,
 And sister-like in love they dwell
 In that lone convent's silent cell
 There Bruce's slow assent allows
 Fair Isabel the veil and vows ,
 And there, her sex's dress regain'd, 60
 The lovely Maid of Loyn remain'd,
 Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
 Resounded with the din of war ,
 And many a month, and many a day,
 In calm seclusion wore away

IV

These days, these months, to years had worn,
 When tidings of high weight were borne
 To that lone island's shore ,
 Of all the Scottish conquests made
 By the first Edward's ruthless blade, 70
 His son retain'd no more,
 Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
 Beleaguer'd by King Robert's powers ,
 And they took term of truce,
 If England's King should not relieve
 The siege ere John the Baptist's eve
 To yield them to the Bruce
 England was oused—on every side
 Courier and post and herald hied,
 To summon prince and peer, 80
 At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege,
 Prepared to raise fan Stirling's siege,
 With buckler, brand, and spear
 The term was nigh—they muster'd fast,
 By beacon and by bugle-blast

Forth marshall'd for the field ,
 There rode each knight of noble name,
 There England's hardy archers came,
 The land they rode seem'd all on flame,
 With banner, blade, and shield ' 90
 And not famed England's powers alone,
 Renown'd in arms, the summons own ,
 For Neustria's knights obey'd,
 Gasconne hath lent her horsemen good,
 And Cambria, but of late subdued,
 Sent forth her mountain-multitude,
 And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood
 Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
 Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd

v

Right to devoted Caledon 100
 The storm of war rolls slowly on,
 With menace deep and dead ,
 So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
 Suspend a while the threaten'd shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head
 Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
 King Robert mark'd the tempest nigh ' 110
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
 His royal summons warn'd the land,
 That all who own'd their King's command
 Should instant take the spear and brand,
 To combat at his side
 O who may tell the sons of fame,
 That at King Robert's bidding came,
 To battle for the right ' 1
 From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
 From Solway-Sands to Marshal's Moss,
 All bound them for the fight,

Such news the royal courier tells, 120
 Who came to rouse dark Arian's dells,
 But farther tidings must the ear
 Of Isabel in secret hear
 These in her cloister walk, next morn,
 Thus shaid she with the Maid of Lorn —

VI

"My Edith, can I tell how dear
 Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel?—
 Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
 When I must say the words, We part ' 130
 The cheerless convent-cell
 Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee,
 Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes fell
 Nor, Edith, judge thyself betray'd,
 Though Robert knows that Lorn's high Maid
 And his poor silent Page were one
 Versed in the fickle heart of man,
 Earnest and anxious hath he look'd
 How Ronald's heart the message brook'd 140
 That gave him, with her last farewell,
 The charge of Sister Isabel,
 To think upon thy better night,
 And keep the faith his promise plight
 Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
 At first if vain repinings wake—
 Long since that mood is gone
 Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
 And oft his breach of faith he blames—
 Forgive him for thine own!— 150

VII

"No! never to Lord Ronald's bower
 Will I again as paramour"—

"Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
 Until my final tale be said '—
 The good King Robert would engage
 Edith once more his elfin page,
 By her own heart, and her own eye,
 Her lover's penitence to try—
 Safe in his royal charge, and free,
 Should such thy final purpose be, 160
 Again unknown to seek the cell,
 And live and die with Isabel "
 Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's eye,
 Might have some glance of policy ,
 Dunstaffnage had the Monarch ta'en,
 And Loyn had own'd King Robert's reign ,
 Her brother had to England fled,
 And there in banishment was dead ,
 Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
 O'er tower and land was Edith's right , 170
 This ample right o'er tower and land
 Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand

VIII

Embarrass'd eye and blushing cheek
 Pleasure and shame, and fear bespeak '
 Yet much the reasoning Edith made —
 " Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
 Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
 In council to another's ear
 Why should she leave the peaceful cell ?—
 How should she part with Isabel ?— 180
 How wear that strange attitude ?—
 How risk herself 'midst martial men ?—
 And how be guarded on the way ?—
 At least she might entreat delay "
 Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
 Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,

Reluctant to be thought to move
At the first call of truant love

IX

Oh, blame her not ! —when zephyrs wake,
The aspen's trembling leaves must shake , 190
When beams the sun through April's shower,
It needs must bloom, the violet flower ,
And Love, how'er the maiden strive,
Must with reviving hope revive !
A thousand soft excuses came,
To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame
Pledged by their sires in earliest youth,
He had her plighted faith and truth—
Then, 'twas her Liege's strict command,
And she, beneath his royal hand, 200
A ward in person and in land —
And, last, she was resolved to stay
Only brief space—one little day—
Close hidden in her safe disguise
From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
But once to see him more !—nor blame
Her wish—to hear him name her name !—
Then, to bear back to solitude
The thought he had his falsehood rued !
But Isabel, who long had seen 210
Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
And well herself the cause might know,
Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
Joy'd, generous, that revolving time
Gave means to expiate the crime
High glow'd her bosom as she said,
“ Well shall her sufferings be repaid ! ”
Now came the parting hour—a band
From Aíran's mountains left the land ,

Their chief, Fitz-Louis, had the care 220
The speechless Amadine to bear
To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
To page the monarch dearly loved

X

The King had deem'd the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gilie's-hill she rode
The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn corn
In battles four beneath their eye
The forces of King Robert lie
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid,
And three, advanced, form'd a vaward-line
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine
Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply
Beyond, the Southern host appears,
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
Strive far, but strive in vain, to spy
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam,
And where the heaven join'd with the hill,
Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost

XII

Down from the hill the maiden pass'd, 250
At the wild show of war aghast ,

And traversed first the rearward host,
 Reserved for aid where needed most
 The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
 Lennox and Lanark too, were there,
 And all the western land,
 With these the valiant of the Isles
 Beneath their Chieftains rank'd then files,

In many a plaided band
 There, in the centre, proudly raised, 260
 The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
 And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
 A galley driven by sail and oar
 A wild yet pleasing contrast made
 Warriors in mail and plate array'd,
 With the plumed bonnet and the plaid

By these Hebrideans worn,
 But O' unseen for three long years,
 Dear was the garb of mountaineers
 To the fair Maid of Lorn ! 270

For one she look'd—but he was fair
 Busied amid the ranks of war—
 Yet with affection's troubled eye
 She mark'd his banner boldly fly,
 Gave on the countless foe a glance,
 And thought on battles desperate chance

XII

To centre of the vaward-line
 Fitz-Louis guided Amadine
 Arm'd all on foot, that host appears
 A serried mass of glimmering spears 280
 There stood the Marchers' warlike band,
 The warriors there of Lothian's land,
 Eddick and Liddell bent the yew,
 A band of archers fierce, though few,

The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
 And the bold Spears of Teviotdale,—
 The dauntless Douglas these obey,
 And the young Stuart's gentle sway
 North-eastward by Saint Ninian's shrine,
 Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine 290
 The warriors whom the hardy North
 From Tay to Sutherland sent forth
 The rest of Scotland's war-array
 With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
 Where Bannock, with his broken bank
 And deep ravine, protects their flank
 Behind them, screen'd by sheltering wood,
 The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal, stood
 His men-at arms bare mace and lance,
 And plumes that wave, and helms that glance 300
 Thus fair divided by the King,
 Centre, and right, and left-ward wing,
 Composed his front, nor distant far
 Was strong reserve to aid the war
 And 'twas to front of this array,
 Her guide and Edith made their way

XIII

Here must they pause, for, in advance
 As far as one might pitch a lance,
 The Monarch rode along the van,
 The foe's approaching force to scan, 310
 His line to marshal and to range,
 And ranks to square, and fronts to change
 Alone he rode—from head to heel
 Sheathed in his ready arms of steel,
 Not mounted yet on war-horse wight,
 But, till more near the shock of fight,
 Reining a palfrey low and light

A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet,
And clasp'd within its glittering twine 320
Was seen the glove of Argentine,
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing instead a battle-axe
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host — Three bowshots far
Paused the deep front of England's war,
And rested on their aims awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night 330
Should view the strife, or dawning light

XIV

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fan,
Was that bright battle-front ' for there
Rode England's King and Peers
And who, that saw that Monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell !— 340
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flash'd at sight of shield and lance
" Know'st thou," he said, " De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line ?"—
" The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege " I know him well"—
" And shall the audacious traitor brave 350
The presence where our banners wave ?"—

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A name renown'd for knightly fame
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once
—As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast —Each breast beat high, 370
And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war horse came !
The partridge may the falcon mock,
If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
But, swerving from the Knight's career,
Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear
Onward the baffled warrior bore 380
His course—but soon his course was o'er !—
High in his stirrups stood the King,
And gave his battle-axe the swing
Right on De Boune, the while he pass'd,
Fell that stein dint—the first—the last !—

Such strength upon the blow was put,
The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut ,
The axe shaft, with its brazen clasp,
Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp
Springs from the blow the startled horse, 390
Drops to the plain the lifeless coise ,
—First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De Boune !

XVI

One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
Where on the field his foe lay dead ,
Then gently turn'd his palfrey's head,
And, pacing back his sober way,
Slowly he gain'd his own array
There round the King the leaders crowd,
And blame his recklessness aloud, 400
That risk'd 'gainst each adventurous spear
A life so valued and so dear
His broken weapon's shaft survey'd
The King, and careless answer made,—
“ My loss may pay my folly's tax ,
I've broke my trusty battle-axe ”
'Twas then Fitz-Louis, bending low,
Did Isabel's commission show ,
Edith, disguised, at distance stands,
And hides her blushes with her hands 410
The Monarch's brow has changed its hue,
Away the gory axe he threw,
While to the seeming page he drew,
Clearing war's terrors from his eye
Her hand with gentle care he took,
With such a kind protecting look,
As to a weak and timid boy
Might speak, that elder brother's care
And elder brother's love were there

XVII

"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine !"
 Then whisper'd, "Still that name be thine
 Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
 Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
 And sends thee here in doubtful hour
 But soon we are beyond her power ,
 For on this chosen battle-plain,
 Victor or vanquish'd, I remain
 Do thou to yonder hill repair ,
 The followers of our host are there,
 And all who may not weapons bear — 430
 Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care —
 Joyful we meet, if all go well ,
 If not, in Arian's holy cell
 Thou must take part with Isabel ,
 For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath sworn,
 Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,
 (The bliss on earth he covets most,)
 Would he forsake his battle post,
 Or shun the fortune that may fall
 To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all — 440
 But, hark ! some news these trumpets tell ,
 Forgive my haste—farewell !—farewell !"—
 And in a lower voice he said,
 "Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid !"—

XVIII

"What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
 And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
 Our leftward flank ?"—the Monarch cried,
 To Moray's Earl who rode beside
 "Lo ! round thy station pass the foes !
 Randolph, thy wreath hath lost a rose" 450
 The Earl his visor closed, and said—
 "My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade,—

Follow, my household !"—And they go
 Like lightning on the advancing foe
 "My Liege," said noble Douglas then,
 "Earl Randolph has but one to ten
 Let me go forth his band to aid !"—
 —"Stu not The error he hath made,
 Let him amend it as he may ,
 I will not weaken mine array " 460
 Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
 And Douglas's brave heart swell'd high,—
 "My Liege," he said, " with patient ear
 I must not Moray's death-knell hear !"—
 "Then go—but speed thee back again"—
 Forth sprung the Douglas with his train
 But, when they won a rising hill,
 He bade his followers hold them still —
 "See, see ! the routed Southern fly !
 The Earl hath won the victory 470
 Lo ! where yon steeds run masterless,
 His banner towers above the press
 Rein up , our presence would impair
 The fame we come too late to share"
 Back to the host the Douglas rode,
 And soon glad tidings are abroad,
 That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,
 His followers fled with loosen'd rein —
 That skirmish closed the busy day,
 And couch'd in battle's prompt array, 480
 Each army on their weapons lay

XIX

It was a night of lovely June,
 High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
 Demayet smiled beneath her ray ,
 Old Stirling's towers arose in light,

And, twined in links of silver bright,
 Her winding river lay
 Ah ! gentle planet ! other sight
 Shall greet thee, next returning night,
 Of broken arms and banners toie, 490
 And marshes dark with human gore,
 And piles of slaughter'd men and horse,
 And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
 And many a wounded wretch to plain
 Beneath thy silver light in vain !
 But now, from England's host, the cry
 Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
 While from the Scottish legions pass
 The murmur'd prayer, the early mass !—
 Here, numbers had presumption given , 500
 There, bands o'er-match'd sought aid from Heaven

xx

On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands
 The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
 With serf and page unfit for war,
 To eye the conflict from afar
 O ! with what doubtful agony
 She sees the dawning tint the sky !—
 Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
 And glimmers now Demayet dun ,
 Is it the laik that carols shrill, 510
 Is it the bittorn's early hum ?
 No !—distant, but increasing still,
 The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,
 With the deep murmur of the drum
 Responsive from the Scottish host,
 Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were toss'd,
 His breast and brow each soldier cross'd,
 And started from the ground ,

Arm'd and array'd for instant fight,
Rose archer, spearman, squire and knight, 520
And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frown'd

XXI

Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew,
Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
And his deep roar sends challenge wide
To all that bars his way !
In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them rode, 530
And midmost of the phalanx broad
The Monarch held his sway
Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle known,
And some who spurs had first braced on,
And deem'd that fight should see them won,
King Edward's hests obey
De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride, 540
Selected champions from the train,
To wait upon his bridle-rein
Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
—At once, before his sight amazed,
Sunk banner, spear, and shield ,
Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent
“The rebels, Argentine, repent !
For pardon they have kneel'd ”—
“Aye !—but they bend to other powers, 550
And other pardon sue than ours !

See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
 And blesses them with lifted hands '
 Upon the spot where they have kneel'd,
 These men will die, or win the field"—
 —"Then prove we if they die or win '
 Bid Gloster's Eail the fight begin "

XXII

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
 Just as the Northern ranks arose,
 Signal for England's archery 560
 To halt and bend their bows
 Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a pace,
 Glanced at the intervening space,
 And raised his left hand high ,
 To the right ear the cords they bring—
 —At once ten thousand bow strings ring,
 Ten thousand arrows fly '
 Nor paused on the devoted Scot
 The ceaseless fury of their shot ,
 As fiercely and as fast, 570
 Forth whistling came the grey-goose wing
 As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
 Adown December's blast
 Nor mountain targe of touch bull hide,
 Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide ,
 Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride,
 If the fell shower may last '
 Upon the right, behind the wood,
 Each by his steed dismounted, stood
 The Scottish chivalry ,— 580
 —With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
 Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
 His own keen heart, his eager train,
 Until the archers gain'd the plain ,
 Then, " Mount, ye gallants free !"

He cried , and, vaulting from the ground,
 His saddle every hoise-man found
 On high their glittering crests they toss,
 As springs the wild-fire from the moss ,
 The shield hangs down on every breast, 590
 Each ready lance is in the rest,

And loud shouts Edward Bruce,—
 “Forth, Marshal ! on the peasant foe !
 We’ll tame the terroirs of their bow,
 And cut the bow-string loose !”

XXIII

Then spurs were dash’d in chargers’ flanks,
 They rush’d among the archer ranks,
 No spears were there the shock to let,
 No stakes to turn the charge were set,
 And how shall yeoman’s armour slight, 600
 Stand the long lance and mace of might ?
 Or what may their short swords avail,
 ’Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail ?
 Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
 High o’er their heads the weapons swung,
 And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
 Give note of triumph and of rout !
 Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
 Then English hearts the strife made good
 Borne down at length on every side, 610
 Compell’d to flight they scatter wide —
 Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
 And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee !
 The broken bows of Bannock’s shore
 Shall in the greenwood ring no more !
 Round Wakefeld’s merry May pole now,
 The maids may twine the summer bough,
 May northward look with longing glance,
 For those that wont to lead the dance,

For the blithe archers look in vain ! 620
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'er'ta'en,
Pierced through, trod down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain

XXIV

The King with scorn beheld their flight
 "Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight?
 Each braggart churl could boast before,
 Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!
 Fitter to plunder chase or park,
 Than make a manly foe their mark—
 Forward, each gentleman and knight!
 Let gentle blood show generous might,
 And chivalry redeem the fight!"
 To rightward of the wild affray,
 The field show'd fair and level way,
 But, in mid-space, the Bruce's care
 Had bored the ground with many a pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
 That form'd a ghastly snare
 Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
 With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,
 That panted for the shock!
 With blazing crests and banners spread,
 And trumpet clang and clamour dread,
 The wide plain thunder'd to their tread,
 As far as Stirling rock
 Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
 Horseman and horse, the foremost go,
 Wild floundering on the field!
 The first are in destruction's gorge
 Their followers wildly o'er them urge,—
 The knightly helm and shield,
 The mail, the axon, and the spear,
 Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!

But, in mid-space, the Bruce's caire
Had boired the ground with many a pit,
With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
That form'd a ghastly snare
Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,
That panted for the shock !
With blazing crests and banners spread,
And trumpet clang and clamour dead,
The wide plain thunder'd to their tread,
As far as Stirling rock
Down ! down ! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go,
Wild floundering on the field !
The first are in destruction's gorge
Then followers wildly o'er them urge, —
The knightly helm and shield,
The mail, the action, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here

The first are in destruction's goige
Then followers wildly o'er them urge ,— 650
The knightly helm, and shield,
The mail, the acton, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here !

Loud from the mass confused the cry
 Of dying wallows swells on high,
 And steeds that shriek in agony !
 They came like mountain-torrent red,
 That thunders o'er its rocky bed ,
 They broke like that same torrent's wave,
 When swallow'd by a darksome cave 660
 Billows on billows burst and boil,
 Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
 And to their wild and tortured groan
 Each adds new terrors of his own !

XXV

Too strong in courage and in might
 Was England yet, to yield the fight
 Her noblest all are here ,
 Names that to fear were never known,
 Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
 And Oxford's famed De Vere 670
 There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
 And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
 Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
 Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
 And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
 Names known too well in Scotland's war,
 At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
 Blazed broader yet in after years,
 At Cressy red and fell Poitiers
 Pembroke with these, and Argentine, 680
 Brought up the rearward battle-line
 With caution o'er the ground they tread,
 Slippery with blood and piled with dead,
 Till hand to hand in battle set,
 The bills with spears and axes met,
 And, closing dark on every side,
 Raged the full contest far and wide

Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
 Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
 And well did Stewart's actions grace
 The sire of Scotland's royal race ! 690

Firmly they kept then ground ,
 As firmly England onward press'd,
 And down went many a noble crest,
 And rent was many a valiant breast,
 And Slaughter revell'd round

XXVI

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
 Unceasing blow by blow was met ,
 The groans of those who fell
 Were drown'd amid the shiller clang, 700
 That from the blades and harness rang,

And in the battle yell
 Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
 Both Southern fierce and hardy Scot ,
 And O ! amid that waste of life,
 What various motives fired the strife !
 The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
 The Patriot for his country's claim ,
 This Knight his youthful strength to prove,
 And that to win his lady's love , 710
 Some fought from ruffian thrust of blood,
 From habit some, or hardihood
 But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
 The noble and the slave,
 From various cause the same wild road,
 On the same bloody morning, trode,
 To that dark inn, the grave !

XXVII

The tug of strife to flag begins,
 Though neither loses yet nor wins

High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust, 720
And feeble speeds the blow and thrust
Douglas leans on his war-sword now,
And Randolph wipes his bloody brow,
Nor less had toil'd each Southern knight,
From morn till mid-day in the fight
Strong Egremont for all must gasp,
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere !
The blows of Berkley fall less fast, 730
And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
Hath lost its lively tone,
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter heard,—
"My merry-men, fight on !"

XXVIII

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy
"One effort more, and Scotland's free !
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock , 740
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge,
Now, forward to the shock !"
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone,
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud King Robert's voice was known—
"Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail !
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
The foe is fainting fast ! 750
Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
The battle cannot last !"

XXIX

The fresh and desperate onset bore
 The foes three furlongs back and more,
 Leaving their noblest in then gone

Alone, De Argentine

Yet bears on high his red-cross shield,
 Gathers the relics of the field,
 Renews the ranks where they have reel'd,

760

And still makes good the line
 Brief strife, but fierce, his efforts raise
 A bright but momentary blaze
 Fair Edith heard the Southern shout,
 Beheld them turning from the rout,
 Heard the wild call then trumpets sent,
 In notes 'twixt triumph and lament
 That rallying force combined anew,
 Appear'd in her distracted view,

To hem the Islesmen round ,
 "O God ! the combat they renew,
 And is no rescue found !

770

And ye that look thus tamely on,
 And see your native land o'erthrown,
 O ! are your hearts of flesh or stone ?"

XXX

The multitude that watch'd afar,
 Rejected from the ranks of war,
 Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
 When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right ,
 Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
 Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,
 Bondsman and serf , even female hand
 Stretch'd to the hatchet on the brand ,

780

But, when mute Amadine they heard
 Give to their zeal his signal word,
 A frenzy fired the throng ,—

"Portents and miracles impeach
 Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—
 And he that gives the mute his speech,
 Can bid the weak be strong 790
 To us, as to our lords, are given
 A native earth, a promised heaven,
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's wrongs,
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warns
 Our breasts as theirs—To arms! to arms!"
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they reared,
 And, like a banner'd host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war 800

XXXI

Already scatter'd o'er the plain,
 Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
 The rearward squadrons fled again,
 Or made but doubtful stay,—
 But when they mark'd the seeming show
 Of fresh and fierce and marshal'd foe,
 The boldest broke away
 O give then hapless prince his due!
 In vain the Royal Edward threw
 His person 'mid the spears, 810
 Cried, "Fight!" to terror and despair,
 Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
 And cursed their crafty fears,
 Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
 And forced him from the fatal plain
 With them rode Argentine, until
 They gain'd the summit of the hill,
 But quitted there the train—
 "In yonder field a gage I left,

I must not live of fame bereft , 820
 I needs must turn again
 Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
 The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
 I know his banner well
 God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
 And many a happier field than this '—
 Once more, my Liege, farewell ! ”

XXXII

Again he faced the battle-field,—
 Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield
 “ Now then,” he said, and couch'd his spear, 830
 “ My course is run, the goal is near ,
 One effort more, one brave career,
 Must close this race of mine ”
 Then in his stirrups rising high,
 He shouted loud his battle cry,
 “ Saint James for Argentine ! ”
 And, of the bold pursuers, four
 The gallant knight from saddle bore ,
 But not unharm'd—a lance's point
 Has found his breastplate's loosen'd joint, 840
 An axe has razed his crest ,
 Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
 Who press'd the chase with gory sword,
 He rode with spear in rest,
 And through his bloody tartans bored,
 And through his gallant breast
 Nail'd to the earth, the mountaineer
 Yet writhed him up against the spear,
 And swung his broadsword round !
 —Stirrup, steel-boot, and cushion gave way, 850
 Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
 The blood gush'd from the wound ,

And the grim Lord of Colonsay
 Hath turn'd him on the ground,
 And laugh'd in death-pang, that his blade
 The mortal thrust so well repaid

XXXIII

Now toil'd the Bruce, the battle done,
 To use his conquest boldly won,
 And gave command for horse and spear
 To press the Southron's scatter'd rear, 860
 Nor let his broken force combine,
 —When the war-cry of Argentine

Fell faintly on his ear,
 "Save, save his life," he cried, "O save
 The kind, the noble, and the brave!"
 The squadrons round free passage gave,
 The wounded knight drew near,
 He raised his red-cross shield no more,
 Helm, cuirass, and breastplate stream'd with gore,
 Yet, as he saw the King advance, 870
 He strove even then to couch his lance—

The effort was in vain!
 The spur stroke fail'd to rouse the horse,
 Wounded and weary, in mid course

He stumbled on the plain
 Then foremost was the generous Bruce
 To raise his head, his helm to loose
 "Lord Earl, the day is thine!"
 My sovereign's charge, and adverse fate,
 Have made our meeting all to late 880

Yet this may Argentine,
 As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
 A Christian's mass, a soldier's grave"

XXXIV

Bruce press'd his dying hand—its grasp
 Kindly replied, but, in his clasp,

It stiffen'd and grew cold—
 "And, O farewell!" the victor cried,
 "Of chivalry the flower and pride,
 The arm in battle bold,
 The courteous mien, the noble race,
 The stainless faith, the manly face!"—
 Bid Ninian's convent light their shrine,
 For late-wake of De Argentine
 O'er better knight on death bier laid,
 Torch never gleam'd nor mass was said!"

XXV

Not for De Argentine alone,
 Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
 And rose the death-prayer's awful tone
 That yellow lustre glimmer'd pale
 On broken plate and bloodied mail, 900
 Rent crest and shatter'd coronet
 Of Baron, Earl, and Banneret
 And the best names that England knew,
 Claim'd in the death-prayer dismal due
 Yet mourn not, Land of Fame !
 Though ne'er the Leopards on thy shield
 Retreated from so sad a field,
 Since Norman William came
 Oft may thine annals justly boast
 Of battles stein by Scotland lost 910
 Grudge not her victory,
 When for her freeborn rights she strove ,
 Rights dear to all who freedom love,
 To none so dear as thee !

XXXVI

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear,
With him, a hundred voices tell
Of prodigy and miracle,

“For the mute page had spoke”—
“Page !” said Fitz-Louis, “rather say, 920
An angel sent from realms of day,
To burst the English yoke
I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
When hurrying from the mountain top,
A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
A step as light upon the green,
As if his pinions waved unseen !”
“Spoke he with none ?”—“With none—one would
Burst when he saw the Island Lord 930
Returning from the battle-field”—
“What answer made the Chief ?”—“He kneel’d,
Durst not look up, but mutter’d low
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him ’twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere”

XXXVII

Even upon Bannock’s bloody plain
Heap’d then with thousands of the slain,
’Mid victor monarch’s musings high,
Mirth laugh’d in good King Robert’s eye — 940
“And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair ?
Hath Ronald ‘kneel’d to him ?” he said,
“Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambuskenneth straight ye pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay for high deliverance given,
A nation’s thanks to gracious Heaven 950
Let him array, besides, such state,
As should on princes’ nuptials wait

Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The Bridal of the Maid of Lorn "

CONCLUSION

Go forth, my Song, upon thy venturous way ,
Go boldly forth , nor yet thy master blame,
Who chose no patron for his humble lay,
And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,
Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path to fame
There was—and O ! how many sorrows crowd
Into these two brief words !—*there was* a claim
By generous friendship given—had fate allow'd,
It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud !

All angel now—yet little less than all, 10
While still a pilgrim in our world below !
What 'vails it us that patience to recall,
Which hid its own to soothe all other woe ,
What 'vails to tell, how Virtue's purest glow
Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair
And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,
That one poor garland, twined to deck thy hair,
Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there !

NOTES

ADVERTISEMENT

Artornish See on l 47

Rachrin isle spelt Rath erin and Rachrine in Scott's note to II 150 On modern maps generally Rathlin In his diary of his voyage Scott says 'We pass between the Main of Ireland and the Isle of Rachrin, a rude, heathy looking island, once a place of refuge to Robert Bruce said in ancient times to have been the abode of banditti' Rathlin, says an Irish correspondent, is a corruption of Rachrann, the genitive of Rachra, which was the old name Ptolemy's map gives it as Rikina The natives call it Raghery Rachra was the name of several islands, now all called Rathlin Rachra, also written Rachru, possibly is Rath cio, i e Fort of cattle folds, the island being often used for grazing

Lord Hailes Sir David Dalrymple, who as a Scotch judge assumed this title, wrote about 60 treatises on legal, historical, and theological subjects His best known works are his reply to Gibbon and his *Annals of Scotland*, which was written in 1776 9, some three years after Johnson and Boswell had made his acquaintance in Edinburgh Scott sometimes quotes him as 'Dalrymple'

Barbour was Archdeacon of Aberdeen from about 1357 till his death, 1396 He was born not long after Bannockburn (1316? 1330?) and wrote his poem *Bruce* about 1375 It consists of more than 13,000 lines of eight syllables in riming couplets Curiously enough, as Green says, he 'confuses Bruce with his grandfather'—or rather, as Sir H Maxwell expresses it, he 'rolls three real personages into one ideal hero,' identifying the Bruce (Robert I) with the original claimant and his son This he could not well have done through ignorance His poem was evidently written, and was accepted by his contemporaries, as a legendary epic—and is scarcely less legendary than the *Iliad* or *Aeneid* He carefully avoids all mention of the facts that the

Bruce had sworn fealty to Edward and had done homage to Balliol, and had stood—perhaps fought—on the side of the oppressors of his country. The invariable success (except at Methven) and the sometimes almost Munchausen like deeds of prowess that he attributes to his hero show how little one can accept his account as historical¹. The Bruce, as he lives in popular imagination, is largely the creation of his *sacer vates*.

CANTO I

The Introductions to all the cantos and the Conclusion are written in nine line Spenserian stanzas, a metre used with splendid effect by Byron in his *Childe Harold*, the first two cantos of which had appeared (1812) two years before. The magnificent ocean roll and thunder of Byron's poetry make us at the sound of the familiar metre look for what is not to be found in Scott. His Spenserian stanzas, especially I think those of the Conclusion, sound like a not unpleasing but very faint echo of Byron, much in the same way as some of the most pleasing parts of the *Lay* are an echo of Coleridge. During 1813 there had been correspondence of a very friendly nature between Scott and Byron, both of whom had a very sincere admiration for the other.

1 **Autumn** of 1814, when Scott was residing at the 'original cottage'. See *Introd.*, pp xi and xxxviii.

2 'John, fifteenth Lord Somerville, illustrious for his patriotic devotion to the science of agriculture, resided frequently in his beautiful villa called the Pavilion, situated on the Tweed over against Melrose, and was an intimate friend and almost daily companion of the poet, from whose windows at Abbotsford his lordship's plantation formed a prominent object'—LOCKHART.

3 From Milton, *P. L.*, vii 406 'their waved coats dropt with gold'. Scott's colouring here is rich and true to nature.

4 **tributaries**. Nearest the Pavilion was 'the rill' Allan (or Elwyn) Water, about two miles down stream the Leader, and farther upstream the Tweed is joined by the Gala Water and the Ettrick, with its tributary the much sung Yarrow.

7 **cushat** ring dove

8 Yet some (greener) tints tell of past summer splendour. It is at sunrise or sunset that the delicate colourings of the autumn woods are best seen. Cf 1 24.

¹The fact, scarcely historical, is stated by Baibour that Edward II had a familiar fiend with whom he used to take counsel.

9 **Ettrick**, or Ettrick Forest (*i.e.* royal hunting ground) was formerly the name of the whole of Selkirkshire, later confined to the district of the Ettrick river, which is flanked by hills rising to about 2000 feet, at this time mostly in possession of various Scotts See on v 815

10 **Gala** 'The river Gala, famous in song, flows into the Tweed a few hundred yards below Abbotsford, but probably the word *Gala* here stands for the poet's neighbour, and kinsman, and much attached friend, John Scott, Esq., of Gala'—
LOCKHART

It is customary in Scotland for a laird to assume the name of his property

15 In Scott's letters when at Ashestiel we hear much of the *kurn*, as the harvest home is called in Scotland

23 **the red leaf shivering** a reminiscence of *Christabel*, l 51

32 **sear and dry** tautology See Vocab

33 **For wound and bugle** see Vocab November's bugle is the storm blast heralding the approach of winter

36 **happier bards** probably a general reference to all successful epic poets such as Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, etc. or a special reference to Barbour, and perhaps 'Blind Harry,' who (about 1440) wrote a history of Wallace in verse

39 **reproved**, *i.e.* vexed, harassed, not a very successful expression

41 **Coolin's hills** See note to III 342

42 **Seer**, *i.e.* bard A minstrel attached to a great family was called a *senach*, 'talker'

43 **Reay** a wild moorland district in N W Sutherlandshire

44 **Harries**, or Harris, the southern portion of the largest island (Lewis) of the Hebrides Iona, or Icomkill (*i.e.* 'Isle of Columba's cell or burial ground') is off Mull It is mentioned in *Macbeth* as *Colme's Kull*, or *St Colme's Inch* The cathedral and other buildings still existing belong (says the Duke of Argyll) to a very different age from that of St Columba (about 560 A.D.) The oldest, the Chapel of St Odhrain, may perhaps date from the time of Queen Margaret (about 1090), and may mark the site of the original chapel of wood and wattle erected by St Columba Of the burying ground, in which numerous tombs are still to be recognised, the Duke says 'This is the *Reilig Odhrain*, the ancient burying place of Iona, whither, during more than a thousand years, were carried kings and chiefs, even from the far off shores of Norway' Seventy kings or princes (among them Kings of Northumbria, Kings of the Isles, etc.) are said to have been interred there According to Shakespeare, King Duncan was buried at *Colme's Kull*

45 mortal coil from Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' See Vocab In the *Lady of the Lake*, III 24, we have 'martial coil'

46 The following note by Scott on the House of Lorn will explain fully the personality of his fictitious heroine, Edith of Lorn, sister (see I 185, III 37, V 1 167) to John, son of Allaster, Lord of Lorn (I 165)

'The House of Lorn was, like the Lord of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew in 1164 This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyshire, and of course [they] might rather be considered as petty princes than feudal barons They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages The Lord of Lorn who flourished during the wars of Bruce was Allaster (or Alexander) Mac Dougal, called Allaster of Aigyle He had married the third daughter of John, called the Red Comyn, who was slain by Bruce in the Dominican Church at Dumfries, and hence he was a mortal enemy of that prince, and more than once reduced him to great straits during the early and distressed period of his reign, as we shall have repeated occasion to notice Bruce, when he began to obtain an ascendancy in Scotland, took the first opportunity in his power to requite these injuries He marched into Argyshire to lay waste the country John of Lorn, son of the chieftain, was posted with his followers in the formidable pass between Dalnally and Bunawe It is a narrow path along the verge of the huge and precipitous mountain, called Cruachan Ben, and guarded on the other side by a precipice overhanging Loch Awe The pass seems to the eye of a soldier as strong, as it is wild and romantic to that of an ordinary traveller But the skill of Bruce had anticipated this difficulty While his main body, engaged in a skirmish with the men of Lorn, detained their attention to the front of their position, James of Douglas, with Sir Alexander Fraser, Sir William Wiseman, and Sir Andrew Grey, ascended the mountain with a select body of archery, and obtained possession of the heights which commanded the pass A volley of arrows descending upon them directly warned the Argyshire men of their perilous situation, and their resistance, which had hitherto been bold and manly, was changed into a precipitous flight The deep and rapid river of Awe was then (we learn the fact from Barbour with some surprise) crossed by a bridge This bridge the mountaineers attempted to demolish, but Bruce's followers were too close upon their rear, they were, therefore, without refuge and defence, and were dispersed with great slaughter John of Lorn, suspicious of the event, had early betaken himself to the galleys which he had upon the lake

'After this decisive engagement, Bruce laid waste Argyleshire, and besieged Dunstaffnage Castle, on the western shore of Lorn, compelled it to surrender, and placed in that principal stronghold of the Mac Dougals a garrison and governor of his own. The elder Mac Dougal, now wearied with the contest, submitted to the victor, but his son, "rebellious," says Barbour, "as he wont to be," fled to England by sea. When the wars between the Bruce and Baliol factions again broke out in the reign of David II, the Lords of Lorn were again found upon the losing side, owing to their hereditary enmity to the house of Bruce. Accordingly, upon the issue of that contest, they were deprived by David II and his successor of by far the greater part of their extensive territories, which were conferred upon Stewart, called the Knight of Lorn. The house of Mac Dougal continued, however, to survive the loss of power, and affords a very rare, if not a unique instance of a family of such unlimited power, and so distinguished during the middle ages, surviving the decay of their grandeur, and flourishing in a private station. The Castle of Dunolly, near Oban, with its dependencies, was the principal part of what remained to them, with their right of chieftainship over the families of their name and blood. These they continued to enjoy until the year 1715, when the representative incurred the penalty of forfeiture for his accession to the insurrection of that period, thus losing the remains of his inheritance, to replace upon the throne the descendants of those princes, whose accession his ancestors had opposed at the expense of their feudal grandeur. The estate was, however, restored about 1745 to the father of the present proprietor, whom family experience had taught the hazard of interfering with the established government, and who remained quiet upon that occasion. He therefore regained his property when many Highland chiefs lost theirs.

'Nothing can be more wildly beautiful than the situation of Dunolly. The ruins are situated upon a bold and precipitous promontory, overhanging Loch Etive, and distant about a mile from the village and port of Oban. The principal part which remains is the donjon, or keep, but fragments of other buildings overgrown with ivy, attest that it had been once a place of importance, as large apparently as Artornish or Dunstaffnage. These fragments enclose a court yard, of which the keep probably formed one side, the entrance being by a steep ascent from the neck of the isthmus, formerly cut across by a moat, and defended doubtless by outworks and a drawbridge. Beneath the castle stands the present mansion of the family, having on the one hand Loch Etive, with its islands and mountains, on the other two romantic eminences tufted with copsewood. There are other accompaniments suited to the scene. In particular, a huge upright pillar, or detached fragment of that sort of rock called plum pudding stone, upon the shore, about a quarter of a mile

from the castle It is called *Clachna caru*, or the Dog's Pillar, because Fingal is said to have used it as a stake to which he bound his celebrated dog Bran Others say, that when the Lord of the Isles came upon a visit to the Lord of Lorn, the dogs brought for his sport were kept beside this pillar Upon the whole, a more, delightful and romantic spot can scarce be conceived and it receives a moral interest from the considerations attached to the residence of a family once powerful enough to confront and defeat Robert Bruce, and now sunk into the shade of private life It is at present possessed by Patrick Mac Dougal, Esq., the lineal and undisputed representative of the ancient Lords of Lorn The heir of Dunolly fell lately in Spain, fighting under the Duke of Wellington—a death well becoming his ancestry'

47 'The ruins of the Castle of Artoinish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the Sound of Mull, a name given to the deep arm of the sea, which divides that island from the continent The situation is wild and romantic to the highest degree The ruins of Artoinish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences But, in former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds which the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire' (Scott) 'It is,' adds Scott, 'almost opposite to the Bay of Aros, in the Island of Mull, where there was another castle, the occasional residence of the Lords of the Isles' Edith and her brother, according to the old Scotch custom, have already, before the wedding day, arrived at the castle of her betrothed, the Lord of the Isles He is coming over for the wedding with his fleet of galleys from his other castle on Aros Bay The ruins of Artoinish (or Ardoinish) Castle are, unfortunately, said by antiquarians to date only from the 15th century, when it belonged to an Earl of Ross, 'Lord of the Isles,' and this title seems only a little older (1354)

52 **Innimore** the S extremity of Morven Cf l 397

53 **Loch Aline** a picturesque sea loch running up into the Morven just above Airdornish

69 A **descant** in music is 'an addition of a part, or parts, to a certain subject or melody' The minstrels now proceed to amplify the simple subject, or 'plain song,' given in l 46

74 **Lettermore** in N W Mull

76 'The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played, and even a tune simply whistled has attractions for them. The

Dean of the Isles says of Heiskar, a small uninhabited rock about twelve (Scottish) miles from the isle of Uist, that an infinite slaughter of seals takes place there'—SCOTT

79 **Ben Cailhach** a mountain in Skye, opposite Scalpa (See Map) *Cailleach* means 'old woman'

89 **Mocks** mimics, vies with Macaulay, in his slashing criticism of Robert Montgomery's Poems, quotes his lines

'And the bright dew bead on the bramble lies,
Like liquid rapture upon beauty's eyes'

'The comparison,' he says, 'of a violet, bright with the dew, to a woman's eyes is as perfect as comparison can be. Sir Walter's lines are part of a song addressed to a woman at daybreak, when the violets are bathed in dew, and the comparison is therefore peculiarly natural and graceful. Dew on a *bramble* is no more like a woman's eyes than dew anywhere else.' I do not know if it has been noticed that Scott borrows the thought from some verses that he wrote 17 years earlier. Of the 'violet in her greenwood bower' he says

'Though fair her gems of azure hue
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining,
I've seen an eye of lovelier blue
More sweet through watery lustre shining'

These lines are praised as some of Scott's best by both Mr Hutton and Mr Palgrave, so I suppose they are really better than they seem to be

92 **Ferrand** evidently the chief minstrel

110 **yonder bay**, i.e. of Aros

112 **pibrochs** cannot play See Vocab

134 **Lochryan** a sea loch in Wigtonshire, noted for oysters

135 Bare ankles adorned with strings of pearls were doubtless no less *comme il faut* in the case of the Maid of Lorn than they would be nowadays with an African princess

157 **Proud Lorn**, i.e. Allaster, the father of Edith and John

176 **battled** Cf iv 560

177 In a letter to his friend Joanna Bailie (whom he held to be the greatest poet of the day) written during his voyage, Scott gives somewhat the same description as the following, which he wrote afterwards as a note to this passage of his poem

'The Sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Sailing from Oban to Aros or Tobermory, through a narrow channel, yet deep enough to bear

vessels of the largest burden, he has on his left the bold and mountainous shores of Mull, on the right those of that district of Argyleshire called Morven, or Moivern, successively indented by deep salt water lochs, running up many miles inland. To the south eastward arise a prodigious range of mountains, among which Cuachan Ben is pre eminent. And to the north east is the no less huge and picturesque range of the Aidnamurchan hills. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene. Those of Dunolly and Dunstaffnage are first passed, then that of Duart, formerly belonging to the chief of the warlike and powerful sept of Macleans, and the scene of Miss Baillie's beautiful tragedy, entitled the Family Legend. Still passing on to the northward, Aitornish and Aros become visible upon the opposite shores, and lastly, Mingarry, and other ruins of less distinguished note. In fine weather a grander and more impressive scene, both from its natural beauties and associations with ancient history and tradition, can hardly be imagined.

1823 'The number of the western isles of Scotland exceeds two hundred, of which St. Kilda is the most northerly, anciently called Hirth or Hirt, probably from "earth," being in fact the whole globe to its inhabitants. Flay is by far the most fertile of the Hebrides. This was in ancient times the principal abode of the Lords of the Isles, being, if not the largest, the most important island of their archipelago. In Martin's time (*Account of the Western Isles*, 1716) some relics of their ancient grandeur were yet extant. "Loch Finlagan, about three miles in circumference, affords salmon, trouts, and eels: this lake lies in the centre of the isle. The Isle Finlagan, from which this lake hath its name, is in it. It's famous for being once the court in which the great Mac Donald, King of the Isles, had his residence, his houses, chapel, etc., are now ruinous. His guards de corps, called Lucht Tach, kept guard on the lake side nearest to the isle, the walls of their houses are still to be seen there. The high court of judicature, consisting of fourteen, sat always here, and there was an appeal to them from all the courts in the isles: the eleventh share of the sum in debate was due to the principal judge. There was a big stone of seven feet square, in which there was a deep impression made to receive the feet of Mac Donald, for he was crowned King of the Isles standing in this stone, and swore that he would continue his vassals in the possession of their lands, and do exact justice to all his subjects, and then his father's sword was put into his hand. The Bishop of Argyle and seven priests anointed him king, in presence of all the heads of the tribes in the isles and continent, who were his vassals: at which time the orator rehearsed a catalogue of his ancestors."—SCOTT

184 **turn**, *z e* bend, curve

185 Edith's brother John is here spoken of as if he were the elder Lord of Lorn, Allaster Macdougall For his subsequent fate, see on vi 167

188 **Mingarry** 'The Castle of Mingarry is situated on the sea coast of the district of Ardnamurchan The ruins, which are tolerably entire, are surrounded by a very high wall, forming a kind of polygon, for the purpose of adapting itself to the projecting angles of a precipice overhanging the sea, on which the castle stands It was anciently the residence of the Mac Ians, a clan of Mac Donalds, descended from Ian, or John, a grandson of Angus Og, Lord of the Isles'—SCOTT

190 Dunstaffnage Castle, three miles N of Oban, near the mouth of L Etive Where the loch contracts at Connel Ferry the tide rushing over a ridge of rocks forms, as Scott says in his *Diary*, a 'furious cataract' (in Ossian called the Falls of Lora) Dunstaffnage is said to have been the seat of the early Pict monarchs Scott describes it in the *Diary* of his voyage round Scotland 'The shell of the castle,' he says, 'for little more now remains, bears marks of extreme antiquity' 'A cranny in the wall,' says Black's *Guide*, 'is pointed out as the original repository of the famous Stone of Destiny which was removed thence to Scone in the reign of Kenneth II' (see *Introd*, p xvi) The castle was captured by Bruce from the Lord of Lorn See note to l 46

197 **Somerled** was thane of Argyre and Lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century He seems to have exercised his authority in both capacities, independent of the Crown of Scotland, against which he often stood in hostility He made various incursions upon the western lowlands during the reign of Malcolm IV, and seems to have made peace with him upon the terms of an independent prince, about the year 1157 In 1164, he resumed the war against Malcolm, and invaded Scotland with a large, but probably a tumultuary army, collected in the isles, in the mainland of Argyreshire, and in the neighbouring provinces of Ireland He was defeated and slain in an engagement with a very inferior force, near Renfrew His son Gillicolane fell in the same battle This mighty chieftain married a daughter of Oluf, King of Man From him our genealogists deduce two dynasties, distinguished in the stormy history of the middle ages the Lords of the Isles descended from his elder son Ronald,—and the Lords of Lorn, who took their surname of M'Dougal, as descended of his second son Dougal'—SCOTT

It is still contested whether the Macdougals of Lorn or the Macdonalds of Islay (Clan Colla, v 455) were the elder branch and therefore 'Kings, or Lords, of the Isles' Scott's 'Ronald' is a Macdonald

198 **Ronald** is, of course, in apposition to 'The heir of mighty Somerled'

220 **Lord of the Isles** 'The representative of this independent principality, for such it seems to have been, though acknowledging occasionally the pre-eminence of the Scottish crown, was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og, but the name has been, *euphoniae gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his castle of Dunnavearty, during the time of his greatest distress'—SCOTT

Og, or rather **Oig**, means 'the younger,' to distinguish him from Angus More (Mohr), 'the greater,' his father, who had been a supporter of the elder Bruce. The title 'Lord of the Isles' seems to be of a date (about 1354) later than Scott supposed.

263 **Bentalla**, or Bentealluidh (said to mean the 'mount of prospect'), about 2800 ft high, is in Mull.

284 **veil'd** See Vocab

287 **mates**, *ie* rivals, vies with

296 **scud** loose dark clouds driven rapidly by the wind. To **scud** is to run a ship before the wind with bare masts, or close reefed sails. The little bark, with the Bruces on board, is tackling up the Sound against the west wind (l. 396) which is favourable for Ronald's fleet. Why Bruce is in these parts and holding this course is fully explained in III. ix.

302 **shelves**, *ie* reefs, or shelving rocks Cf. 319

316 **wore**, *ie* answered to the new tack. In this sense the verb *to wear* is merely a form of *to veer* (Fr. *vire*), and has no connexion with the ordinary verb *to wear*, although the past tense *wore* is evidently due to its influence.

317 **boltsprit** See Vocab

321 The **crew** is again mentioned, l. 574, so that the three Bruces are not alone, as one is rather led to suppose from l. 430.

328 **trick'd** See Vocab

336 **boss** probably the metal or ivory bosses on the bridle. Mr. Bayne quotes from Pope 'This ivory, intended for the bosses of a bridle.'

340 **hauberks** and **burnish'd** See Vocab

346 **Salne** (now Salen) is a village near Aros, in Mull.

Scallastle, or Scallasdale is a bay nearly opposite Artornish.

349 **Duart Castle** is on a high cliff in Mull facing Loch Linnhe. See on l. 177.

360 90 For wold, scatheless, bonnet, cheer, armada, and wassail, see Vocab

397 Inninmore See on l 52

402 One Edward, brother of Robert Bruce

406 wildered distracted by wind and currents

414 Isabel fictitious sister of Robert and Edward Bruce
See Introd, p xxi note

434 the western bay, i.e. Aros

450 The phosphorescence of the sea is said to be due to vast quantities of a very minute animal that has been named marine Noctiluca, or 'Night light' Scott gives us the following note on this passage

'The phenomenon called by sailors Sea fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides. At times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness. These phosphoric appearances, concerning the origin of which naturalists are not agreed in opinion, seem to be called into action by the rapid motion of the ship through the water, and are probably owing to the water being saturated with fish spawn, or other animal substances. They remind one strongly of the description of the sea snakes in Mr Coleridge's wild, but highly poetical ballad of the *Ancient Mariner*

'Beyond the shadow of the ship

I watched the water snakes,

They moved in tracks of shining white,

And when they rear'd, the elvish light

Fell off in hoary flakes'

462 meteor light This may mean the *aurora borealis*, the pulsating light of which is certainly much more like marine phosphorescence than is the eruption or the glare of an active volcano. Still it seems almost impossible that Hecla should be mentioned in such connexion as inactive and with no reference to its 'meteor light'—meteor like, or rocket like, projectiles 'streaking' the midnight sky

472 Scott is fond of these effects of different coloured light
Cf v 302, 363

475 Cf l 9

496 lee See Vocab

499 dark fortress Scott's note is as follows 'The fortress of a Hebridean chief was almost always on the sea shore, for the facility of communication which the ocean afforded. Nothing can be more wild than the situations which they chose, and the

devices by which the architects endeavoured to defend them. Narrow stairs and arched vaults were the usual mode of access, and the drawbridge appears at Dunstaffnage, and elsewhere, to have fallen from the gate of the building to the top of such a staircase, so that any one advancing with hostile purpose, found himself in a state of exposed and precarious elevation, with a gulf between him and the object of his attack.

‘These fortresses were guarded with equal care. The duty of the watch devolved chiefly upon an officer called the Cockman, who had the charge of challenging all who approached the castle. The very ancient family of Mac Niel of Barra kept this attendant at their castle about a hundred years ago. Martin gives the following account of the difficulty which attended his procuring entrance there: “The little island Kismul lies about a quarter of a mile from the south of this isle (Barra), it is the seat of Mackneil of Barra, there is a stone wall round it two stories high, reaching the sea, and within the wall there is an old tower and a hall, with other houses about it. There is a little magazine in the tower, to which no stranger has access. I saw the officer called the Cockman, and an old cock he is, when I bid him ferry me over the water to the island, he told me that he was but an inferior officer, his business being to attend in the tower, but if (says he) the constable, who then stood on the wall, will give you access, I’ll ferry you over. I desired him to procure me the constable’s permission, and I would reward him, but having waited some hours for the constable’s answer, and not receiving any, I was obliged to return without seeing this famous fort. Mackneil and his lady being absent, was the cause of this difficulty, and of my not seeing the place. I was told some weeks after, that the constable was very apprehensive of some design I might have in viewing the fort, and thereby to expose it to the conquest of a foreign power, of which I suppose there was no great cause of fear.”’

503 515 For brand, wound, cresset, wildering, see Vocab and cf 406

508 From the postern, back gate of the Castle, a flight of stone steps (572), cut in a narrow passage through the solid rock, led down to the sea—as at Dunvegan and other such castles.

512 He mistakes Bruce for the Abbot of Iona, who arrives later (II. xx1)

522 Brook not of permit not of See Vocab

529 leeward, i.e. sheltered See Vocab

536 Cf *Macbeth* I. iii ‘In stout Norweyan ranks’

540 list choose, wish ‘As the winds listed’ (*Comus*)

541 The fiction comes in usefully more than once See III 506

544 these brief words *i.e.* 'what I have said has a dear (*i.e.* weighty) import, which gives rightful claim to '

551 Hold, 'keep,' 'strength,' and other such words are used for 'Castle' Cf Germ *Zunger*

553 For pilgrim, wold, and lea, see Vocab

556 revolves *i.e.* 'will be shut', perhaps the idea is shooting the bolt by turning a key

566 Sir William Wallace's estate was Ellerslie, or Elderslie, in Renfrewshire See Introd, p. xvi

568 Comyn See Introd, p. xvii n, and Scott's note to II 214

585 600 For bound, casque, portcullis, wicket, loophole, and yeoman, see Vocab

603 our Lord *i.e.* Ronald, who has meanwhile arrived at his Castle

608 of moulding stark of powerful frame See Vocab This expression was quoted by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review* as uncouth, and probably seems so to all unprejudiced readers

610 Eachin the warder's name

616 plaid See Vocab The word *tartan* seems to be from the Spanish *tintaña* (Fr. *tu etanne*), of unknown origin, meaning a thin woollen cloth

622 cloak of pall See Vocab under *pall*

634 Seneschal See Vocab and note II 90

637 tide, A S *tid*, Germ *Zeit* = season Hence the rise of the sea at certain intervals is a *tide* 'Time' and 'tide' are thus synonyms, one from the Latin, the other from the A S, or perhaps both from A S

CANTO II

The introductory stanza makes us forbode the scene that follows, as the first dissonance and distant thunder roll in the Pastoral Symphony foretell the coming storm

4 sound the dirge of Care, *i.e.* try to drown and bury care Cf 'Spout that wrinkled Care derides' (*Allegro*)

10 beaker See Vocab In drinking healths the beakers were clashed together

24 pledge means here a 'toast' See Vocab

31 gave to explained by, attributed to

37 For his death see Canto VI xxxi *seq* Scott gives us the following note 'Sir Egidius or Giles de Argentine was one of the most accomplished knights of the period He had served

in the wais of Luxemburg with such high reputation that he was, in popular estimation, the third worthy of the age. Those to whom fame assigned precedence over him were Henry of Luxemburg himself and Robert Bruce. Argentine had warred in Palestine, encountered thrice with the Saracens, and had slain two antagonists in each engagement—an easy matter, he said, for one Christian knight to slay two Pagan dogs. His death corresponded with his high character. With Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, he was appointed to attend immediately upon the person of Edward II. at Bannockburn. When the day was utterly lost they forced the king from the field. De Argentine saw the king safe from immediate danger, and then took his leave of him. "God be with you, sir," he said, "it is not my wont to fly." So saying, he turned his horse, cried his war cry, plunged into the midst of the combatants, and was slain. Baston, a rhyming monk who had been brought by Edward to celebrate his expected triumph, and who was compelled by the victors to compose a poem on his defeat, mentions with some feeling the death of Sir Giles de Argentine.

45 cheer spirits, mood (as expressed by countenance) See Vocab

55 For *Somerled*, see on l 197. In his note on this passage Scott describes an old (Saxon or Irish) cup of black oak, richly carved and ornamented with silver, which is still (as also the 'fairy flag') one of the chief treasures at Dunvegan Castle. The horn of Rorie More (described by Dr. Johnson and also by Boswell in his *Tour*) is a large drinking horn with a silver rim. As it seems that the old cup only dates from 1493 instead of (as Scott believed) from 993, I omit that part of his very long note in which he speaks of its inscription.

'A Hebridean drinking cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the Castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac Leod of Mac Leod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan. The horn of Rorie More, preserved in the same family, and recorded by Dr. Johnson, is not to be compared with this piece of antiquity, which is one of the greatest curiosities in Scotland. The following is a pretty accurate description of its shape and dimensions, but cannot, I fear, be perfectly understood without a drawing.

'This very curious piece of antiquity is nine inches and three quarters in inside depth, and ten and a half in height on the outside, the extreme measure over the lips being four inches and a half. The cup is divided into two parts by a wrought ledge, beautifully ornamented, about three fourths of an inch in breadth. Beneath this ledge the shape of the cup is rounded off, and terminates in a flat circle, like that of a tea cup, four

short feet support the whole Above the projecting ledge the shape of the cup is nearly square, projecting outward at the brim The cup is made of wood (oak to all appearance), but most curiously wrought and embossed with silver work, which projects from the vessel There are a number of regular projecting sockets, which appear to have been set with stones, two or three of them still hold pieces of coral, the rest are empty At the four corners of the projecting ledge, or cornice, are four sockets, much larger, probably for pebbles or precious stones The workmanship of the silver is extremely elegant, and appears to have been highly gilded The ledge brim and legs of the cup are of silver The family tradition bears that it was the property of Neil Ghlune du, or Black knee But who this Neil was, no one pretends to say Around the edge of the cup is a legend, perfectly legible, in the Saxon black letter'

69 The whole of this section is a specimen of what in Scott's poetry sometimes comes dangerously near melodrama or even burlesque

78 wheel 'an instrument of torture formerly used, the victim being fastened on it and his limbs broken by successive blows' (*Dict*)

86 your board Are we to infer that the Lord of Lorn had to supply the wedding feast in Ronald's castle?

90 Seneschal See Vocab Scott gives the following note 'The Sewer, to whom, rather than the Seneschal, the office of arranging the guests of an island chief appertained, was an officer of importance in the family of a Hebridean chief — "Every family had commonly two stewards, which, in their language, were called Marischal Tach the first of these served always at home, and was obliged to be versed in the pedigree of all the tribes in the isles, and in the highlands of Scotland, for it was his province to assign every man at table his seat according to his quality, and this was done without one word speaking, only by drawing a scōrte with a white rod, which this Marischal had in his hand, before the person he was bid by him to sit down and this was necessary to prevent disorder and contention, and though the Marischal might sometimes be mistaken, the master of the family incurred no censure by such an escape but this custom has been laid aside of late They had also cup bearers, who drives filled and carried the cup round the company, and he himself always drank off the first draught They had likewise purse masters, who kept their money Both these officers had an hereditary right to their office in writing, and each of them had a town and land for his service some of those rights I have seen fairly written on good parchment"—MARTIN'S *Western Isles*'

96 gilded spurs See note on VI xxxv

99 For *dais*, *canopy*, and *marshal*, see *Vocab*

118 *Ferrand* See I 92 Surely also this passage—as a good many more—has some affinity to burlesque

139 In his original manuscript, as Lockhart tells us, Scott wrote

‘Nor hide her form’s fan symmetry’

This he altered, evidently in order to avoid the repetition of ‘hide’ The sense is ‘Nor could it hide’

149 See *Introd*, p xxi n, and note to Scott’s *Advertisement*, and for *Carriek’s Chief* see on v 475 In the following note Scott gives further details ‘It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents He was crowned at Scone by the general consent of the Scottish barons, but his authority endured but a short time According to the phrase said to have been used by his wife, he was for that year “a summer king, but not a winter one” On the 29th March, 1306, he was crowned king at Scone Upon the 19th June, in the same year, he was totally defeated at Methven, near Perth, and his most important adherents, with few exceptions, were either executed or compelled to embrace the English interest, for safety of their lives and fortunes After this disaster his life was that of an outlaw rather than a candidate for monarchy He separated himself from the females of his retinue, whom he sent for safety to the Castle of Kildrummy, in Aberdeenshire, where they afterwards became captives to England From Aberdeenshire Bruce retreated to the mountainous parts of Breadalbane, and approached the borders of Argyleshire There he was defeated by the Lord of Lorn, who had assumed arms against him in revenge of the death of his relative, John the Red Comyn Escaped from this peril, Bruce, with his few attendants, subsisted by hunting and fishing, until the weather compelled them to seek better sustenance and shelter than the Highland mountains afforded With great difficulty they crossed, from Rowaidennan probably, to the western banks of Lochlomond, partly in a miserable boat, and partly by swimming The valiant and loyal Earl of Lennox, to whose territories they had now found their way, welcomed them with tears, but was unable to assist them to make an effectual head The Lord of the Isles, then in possession of great part of Cantyre, received the fugitive monarch and future restorer of his country’s independence, in his Castle of Dunnaveity, in that district But treason, says Barbour, was so general, that the king durst not abide there Accordingly, with the remnant of his followers, Bruce embarked for Rath Erin, or Ráchrine, the Recina of Ptolemy, a small

island, lying almost opposite to the shores of Ballycastle, on the coast of Ireland. The islanders at first fled from their new and armed guests, but upon some explanations submitted themselves to Bruce's sovereignty. He resided among them until the approach of spring [1307], when he again returned to Scotland, with the desperate resolution to reconquer his kingdom, or perish in the attempt. The progress of his success, from its commencement to its completion, forms the brightest period in Scottish history.

164 *bill and bow*, i.e. billman and bowman

180 'Robert Bruce,' says Scott, 'after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire Highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the Lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men: that Mac Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was equal to his vigour of mind, and would have been slain on the spot, had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms M'Keoch, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed by the other followers of Lorn, that he was forced to abandon the mantle, and brooch which fastened it, clasped in the dying grasp of the Mac Keoch's. A studded brooch, said to have been that which King Robert lost upon this occasion, was long preserved in the family of Mac Dougal, and was lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.'

~~It is said, however,~~ by a recent annotator, that the Mac Dougalls still possess what they assert to be the original brooch—it having been stolen, and repurchased from a pawnbroker. Another 'original brooch of Lorn' is said to be in the British Museum, and to be apparently of 16th century workmanship. Such Highland brooches are of silver, not of 'burning gold.' Martin (in his *Western Isles*) describes one 'as broad as any ordinary pewter plate.'

184 *tartan*. See on i. 616

193 Cf. 'the swart faery of the mine' (*Comus*, 436). In Norse and German mythology dwarfs are the workers of metals and the guardians of subterranean treasures. For *swart*, see Vocab.

205 The fight took place, it is said, at Dalry (the 'king's

field'), not far from Tyndrum, at the head of Glen Dochart Bendournish, or Ben dhu Craig, is in the neighbourhood

212 'The gallant Sir James, called the Good Lord Douglas, the most faithful and valiant of Bruce's adherents, was wounded at Dalry Sir Nigel, or Niel, Campbell was also in that unfortunate skirmish. He married Marjorie, sister to Robert Bruce'—SCOTT

For further details see on II 568, and VI 23

214 'Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The causes of this act of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians, and cannot now be ascertained. The fact that they met at the high altar of the Minorites' or Greyfriars' Church in Dumfries, that their difference broke out into high and insulting language, and that Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, is certain. Rushing to the door of the church, Bruce met two powerful barons, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn and James de Lindsay, who eagerly asked him what tidings. "Bad tidings," answered Bruce, "I doubt I have slain Comyn." "Doubtest thou?" said Kirkpatrick, "I make sicker" (*ie* sure). With these words, he and Lindsay rushed into the church and despatched the wounded Comyn. The Kirkpatricks of Closeburn assumed, in memory of this deed, a hand holding a dagger, with the memorable words, "*I make sicker*"—SCOTT

216 Barendown and De la Haye 'are enumerated' by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven—SCOTT

221 brand See Vocab

239 'The character of the Highland bards seems soon to have degenerated. They seem to have sunk into contempt, as well as the orators, or men of speech (*ie* *senachis*), with whose office that of family poet was often united'—SCOTT. The account given by Bruce, which differs from that given by Ferrand, is taken from Barbour. The details are related by Scott in a long note

255 See on I 44

269 Three daggers See on I 214

280 Barcaldine on Loch Cieran, near the mouth of Loch Linnhe

281 Kinloch Alline Castle is at the head of Loch Alline, near Artoinish

287 Surely one of the most banal lines ever penned by a poet who has given us so much that is really grand and beautiful

294 The Macleods of Skye, as Scott tells us, and many other Hebridean families, are of Scandinavian extraction. For an account of the Macleods of Dunvegan Castle the student might refer to my notes on Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*. The name Toiquil contains the name of the god Thor. See on l. 500 and l. 512.

296 **Bara**, or **Baria**, the smallest and most southern of the Outer Hebrides. For **Thane** see *Vocab.*, and for **Duart**, etc., see map. **Clan Gillian** is the **Clan Maclean**. The **Macduffiths**, or **Macphees**, are (says **Mr Mackenzie**) the most ancient inhabitants of Colonsay. See vi. 842.

302 **that**=since that

320 **in minstrel line**, i.e. handed down from bard to bard, as the oft sung fight of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ (*Horace, Carm. I. viii*).

326 **still** used as a noun. See *Introd.* stanza to *III*, there the silence after the thunderclap is described.

329 **Sworder**. In 2 *Hen VI.*, iv. 1, 'a Roman sworder and banditto slave murdered sweet Tully,' the word is used contemptuously. Whether Scott was thinking specially of any ancient statue of a warrior or gladiator with 'blade advanced' I cannot say, certainly not the celebrated 'dying gladiator (or Gaul)', and most certainly not (as has been suggested) the effigy of a warrior which, as he tells us in his *Diary*, he saw in a church in Harris 'with his hand on his two handed broadsword'. The *Perseus* of Canova is the only well-known statue that seems at all to correspond to the description, and in 1814, after Napoleon's abdication, there was naturally much interest taken in the statue which had been a 'consoler' to the Romans for the loss of the *Apollo Belvedere*.

330 Whether the 'torch of life' has any special association, I do not know. It seems here a very awkward expression.

340 See on *II*. 37.

343 **Isabel** is supposed to have been with her brother and **Argentine** at the Court of Edward I. (see *Introd.*, p. xix), and to have dealt prizes at tournaments held at Woodstock and elsewhere. See *III*. 566 and *IV*. 383.

354 Here again is a passage about up to the level of a burlesque or comic opera.

396 **martyrs' bay**, on the east coast of Iona. It is so called because the monks were here massacred by Norsemen in 806 A.D.

397 Various stones are connected with **St Columba**. One is 'locally regarded as the coracle (petrified) in which he crossed to Iona'. Another is still shown to the visitor as the saint's pillow. It is said to have formerly stood by his grave.

399 'In the Gaelic language at the present day Iona is familiarly called *I*, which means Island'—DUKE OF ARGYLL Cf *I colm holl* (see on 1 44) *Dun Y*, the 'Island Dune,' is the principal hill of Iona, 320 ft high

401 A *grith* (cf *ganth*, *yard*, *garden*, etc) is an inclosure, often, as here, sacred enclosures, such as cemeteries, monastery grounds, etc It is asserted that there were formerly 360 crosses in Iona Two only now remain Scott represents them as prayer stations Cf v 137

407 doom, verdict, sentence

411 black stol'd See Vocab under *stole*

422 *seq* For rood, amice, brand, ban, see Vocab

449 Bruce was formally excommunicated in 1306, after his murder of the Red Comyn The sentence was promulgated in St Paul's Cathedral (Scott says, by the Archbishop of York) It seems to have had but little effect in Scotland, and was repealed about 1328

450 All editions read *Yet well I grant* The sense of *well* is not clear to me It seems equivalent to 'nevertheless,' 'all the same'—possibly a Scotch use of the word Or should there be a pause after 'Yet?' Or is it a misprint for 'will?' Or is it 'Yet I grant wholly'?

457 *Lorn* is accusative

461 See on 1 47 'It was anciently customary in the High lands to bring the bride to the house of the husband'—SCOTT The insulting expression used here by her brother evidently rankles in Edith's mind, as she repeats it seven years later (VI 152)

464 Clifford fell afterwards at Bannockburn, but Scott kills him off some seven years earlier at the (fictitious) capture of Turnberry Castle See on v 779

476 *had* reads somewhat awkwardly for *has* or *hath*, as it is *oratio directa*

478 See Introd, p xviii, and on 1 566 Scott quotes from Stow's *Chronicles* a description of how Wallace was brought to London 'with great numbers of men and women wondering upon him,' and how in the great hall of Westminster he was 'placed on the south bench, and crowned with laurel, for that he had said in times past that he ought to bear a crown in that hall,' and how he was 'appeached for a traitor' and 'headed and quartered' There is considerable doubt as to how Wallace was captured 'That he was betrayed to the English,' says Scott, 'is indubitable, and popular fame charges Sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy But he was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and was Governor of Dumbarton

Castle by commission from Edward I, and therefore could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be' Menteith seems to have captured Wallace through the treachery of some attendant called Jack Short

481 'When these lines were written,' says Scott, 'the author was remote from the means of correcting his indistinct recollection concerning the individual fate of Bruce's followers after the battle of Methven Hugh de la Haye, and Thomas Somerville of Lintoun and Cowdally, ancestor of Lord Somerville, were both made prisoners at that defeat, but neither was executed

'Sir Nigel Bruce was the younger brother of Robert, to whom he committed the charge of his wife and daughter, Marjorie, and the defence of his strong castle of Kildrummie, near the head of the Don, in Aberdeenshire Kildrummie long resisted the aims of the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford, until the magazine was treacherously burnt The garrison was then compelled to surrender at discretion, and Nigel Bruce, a youth remarkable for personal beauty, as well as for gallantry, fell into the hands of the unrelenting Edward He was tried by a special commission at Berwick, was condemned, and executed

'Christopher Seaton shared the same unfortunate fate He also was distinguished by personal valour, and signalized himself in the fatal battle of Methven Robert Bruce adventured his person in that battle like a knight of romance He dismounted Amyer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, but was in his turn dismounted by Sir Philip Mowbray In this emergency Seaton came to his aid, and remounted him Langtoft mentions, that in this battle the Scottish wore white surplices, or shirts, over their armour, that those of rank might not be known In this manner both Bruce and Seaton escaped But the latter was afterwards betrayed to the English There was some peculiarity respecting his punishment, because, according to Matthew of Westminster, he was considered not as a Scottish subject, but an Englishman He was therefore taken to Dumfries, where he was tried, condemned, and executed, for the murder of a soldier slain by him His brother, John de Seton, had the same fate at Newcastle, both were considered as accomplices in the slaughter of Comyn, but in what manner they were particularly accessory to that deed does not appear

'The fate of Sir Simon Frazer, or Frizel, ancestor of the family of Lovat, is dwelt upon at great length, and with savage exultation, by the English historians This knight, who was renowned for personal gallantry, and high deeds of chivalry, was also made prisoner, after a gallant defence, in the battle of Methven'

Scott quotes hereupon from a ballad and an old chronicle which give all the revolting details of Frazer's execution As to other victims, see *Introd*, p. xx, footnote 4

489 On the ensign of Edward I there were three leopards (gold on red) Before Henry II (as may be seen in illustrated histories) the Norman arms had *two* leopards The third was added to represent the additional French territories which Henry II acquired Froissart says that Richard II, on going to Ireland, gave up the arms of England, 'leopards and fleurs-de lys quarterly,' and adopted those of Edward the Confessor (a cross and birds) The leopards seem very early to have assumed a decidedly leonine pose and expression

491 'John de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed, with circumstances of great barbarity, being first half strangled, then let down from the gallows while yet alive, barbarously dismembered, and his body burnt It may surprise the reader to learn, that this was a *mitigated* punishment, for in respect that his mother was a grand daughter of King John, he was not drawn on a sledge to execution, "that point was forgiven," and he made the passage on horseback Matthew of Westminster tells us that King Edward, then extremely ill, received great ease from the news that his relative was apprehended "*Quo audito, Rex Anglia, etsi gravissimo morbo tunc lanqueret, levius tamen tulit dolorem*" To this singular expression the text alludes'—Scott

'Edward,' says Fraser Tytler, 'on hearing of his being taken, although he lay grievously sick, expressed great exultation, and while some interceded for Athol on account of the royal blood which flowed in his veins, swore that his only distinction should be a higher gallows than his fellow traitors Nor was this an empty threat He was carried to London and hanged upon a gallows fifty feet high'

494 'This alludes,' says Scott, 'to a passage in Barbour singularly expressive of the vindictive spirit of Edward I The prisoners taken at the Castle of Kildrummie had surrendered upon condition that they should be at King Edward's disposal The news arrived when he was in his mortal sickness at Burgh upon Sands' In the lines quoted from Barbour when the king was asked what was to be done with the prisoners,

'Then look'd he angryly them to,
He said grinning *Hangs and draws*'

500 See 1 294 Of the Macleods and other Hebridean families Scott says that 'some were later, or imperfect, converts to Christianity' Woden, Wotan, or Odin, was the Zeus of northern mythology (N B — *Wednesday* = Woden's day, and *Thursday* = Thor's day)

506 Randolph From Scott's note to vi 25, it seems that Randolph at this period was really in the English interest

525 **canons** rules, or laws, of the Church See Vocab

526 **Anathēma**, lit something placed in a temple as a votive gift (in a good sense it is rather *anathēma*), hence something 'devoted' or 'accused', also the act of cursing or excommunicating See on l 449

534 *seq* For **ban**, **scutcheon**, **hearse**, **meed**, see Vocab

543 4 **doom** Rome For the pronunciation, cf *Jul Caes*, I II, 'Now is it Rome indeed and room enough'

552 See on II 314

564 **cope and stole** See Vocab

568 'Bruce,' says Scott, 'uniformly professed, and probably felt, compunction for having violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn, and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, he requested James, Lord Douglas, to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre' Lord Douglas never reached Palestine He was killed in Spain, where he took service with the King of Castile against the Moors In the description of Melrose Abbey in Black's *Guide* it is said that 'the heart of King Robert the Bruce was deposited here, after the heroic though unsuccessful attempt made by Lord Douglas to carry it to the Holy Land'

576 **shrift**, A S *scrift*, Germ *Schrift*, is borrowed from the Lat *scriptus*, written It really means 'a writing', hence a written formal confession

578 The following passage describing the abbot's involuntary blessing is praised by contemporary reviewers as 'transcendant,' and as 'perhaps excelling any single part of any other of Mr Scott's compositions' It certainly has power of a certain kind, but will be probably regarded by most readers as a little too melodramatic The Abbot gives Bruce the Norman 'de' The family was of Norman extraction

593 See *Numbers* xxxiii, xxxiv

595 'The Archdeacon of Aberdeen (Barbour),' says Scott, 'instead of the abbot of this tale, introduces an Irish Pythoness (prophetess), who not only predicted his good fortune as he left the Island of Rachrin, but sent her two sons along with him'

609 **Thrice vanquish'd** If this is meant literally, I suppose it refers to Methven, Tyndrum (II 205), and some other of the various frays that took place at the same period

611 'This,' says Scott, 'is not metaphorical The echoes of Scotland did actually

" Ring

With the bloodhounds that bayed for her fugitive king "

'A very curious and romantic tale is told by Barbour upon this subject, which may be abridged as follows

'When Bruce had again got footing in Scotland in the spring of 1306 (1307?) he continued to be in a very weak and precarious condition, gaining, indeed, occasional advantages, but obliged to fly before his enemies whenever they assembled in force Upon one occasion, while he was lying with a small party in the wilds of Cumnock, in Ayrshire, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, with his inveterate foe, John of Lorn, came against him suddenly with eight hundred Highlanders, beside a large body of men at arms They brought with them a slough dog, or bloodhound, which, some say, had been once a favourite with the Bruce himself, and therefore was least likely to lose the trace

'Bruce, whose force was under four hundred men, continued to make head against the cavalry, till the men of Lorn had nearly cut off his retreat Perceiving the danger of his situation, he acted as the celebrated and ill requited Mina is said to have done in similar circumstances He divided his force into three parts, appointed a place of rendezvous, and commanded them to retreat by different routes . But when John of Lorn arrived at the spot where they divided, he caused the hound to be put upon the trace, which immediately directed him to the pursuit of that party which Bruce headed This, therefore, Lorn pursued with his whole force, paying no attention to the others The king again subdivided his small body into three parts, and with the same result, for the pursuers attached themselves exclusively to that which he led in person He then caused his followers to disperse, and retained only his foster brother in his company The slough dog followed the trace, and, neglecting the others, attached himself and his attendants to pursuit of the king Lorn became convinced that his enemy was nearly in his power, and detached five of his most active attendants to follow him, and interrupt his flight They did so with all the agility of mountaineers "What aid wilt thou make?" said Bruce to his single attendant, when he saw the five men gain ground on him "The best I can," replied his foster brother "Then," said Bruce, "here I make my stand" The five pursuers came up fast The king took three to himself, leaving the other two to his foster brother He slew the first who encountered him, but observing his foster brother hard pressed, he sprung to his assistance, and despatched one of his assailants Leaving him to deal with the survivor, he returned upon the other two, both of whom he slew before his foster brother had despatched his single antagonist When this hard encounter was over, with a courtesy, which in the whole work marks Bruce's character, he thanked his foster brother for his aid "It likes you to say so," answered his follower, "but you yourself slew four of the five" "True," said the king, "but only because I had better opportunity than

you They were not apprehensive of me when they saw me encounter thee, so I had a moment's time to spring to thy aid, and to return equally unexpectedly upon my own opponents "

'In the meantime Lorn's party approached rapidly, and the king and his foster brother betook themselves to a neighbouring wood Here they sat down, for Bruce was exhausted with fatigue, until the cry of the slough hound came so near that his foster brother entreated Bruce to provide for his safety by retreating further "I have heard," answered the king, "that whosoever will wade a bow shot length down a running stream, shall make the slough hound lose scent Let us try the experiment, for were yon devilish hound silenced, I should care little for the rest "

'Lorn in the meanwhile advanced, and found the bodies of his slain vassals, over whom he made his moan, and threatened the most deadly vengeance Then he followed the hound to the side of the brook, down which the king had waded a great way Here the hound was at fault, and John of Lorn, after long attempting in vain to recover Bruce's trace, relinquished the pursuit

"Others," says Barbour, "affirm that upon this occasion the king's life was saved by an excellent archer who accompanied him, and who perceiving they would be finally taken by means of the bloodhound, hid himself in a thicket, and shot him with an arrow In which way," adds the metrical biographer, "this escape happened I am uncertain, but at that brook the king escaped from his pursuers "

CANTO III

3 Cf II 326

20 *seq* For oriel, rede, wreak, dungeon, meed, and mood, see Vocab

65 *pirate* a sort of peison, remarks Scott, common at that time in the Isles

76 *impotent* of ire, i e 'not master of his ire' (a Latin construction) *Impotent* is in apposition to the genitive case *Lorn's* —a very questionable construction in English

94 For Argentine's death see VI 819 *seq*

For a gage in the helmet, cf *Henry V*, IV 1

132 For beads, see Vocab Ave=Ave Maria, 'Hail Mary'

134 *wont* The old verb to *wone* means (e g in Chaucer) to dwell, hence to be accustomed to a place Spenser uses to *won*, to be accustomed (Of Milton's 'as others use' In German *wohnen* is 'to dwell,' but *gewohnt* is 'accustomed')

146 *falchion* See Vocab

163 See Introd, p xviii, footnote Scott says 'I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition that Bruce fought against Wallace, and the array of Scotland, at the fatal battle of Falkirk. The story, which seems to have no better authority than that of Blind Harry' (in his metrical account of Wallace written about 1460) 'bears, that having made much slaughter during the engagement, he sat down to dine with the conquerors without washing the filthy witness from his hands

"Fasting he was, and had been in great need,
 Blooded were all his weapons and his weed,
 Southeron lords scorned him in terms rude,
 And said, Behold yon Scot eats his own blood

"Then rued he sore, for reason bad be known,
 That blood and land alike should be his own
 With them he long was, ere he got away,
 But contrair Scots he fought not from that day "

The account given by most of our historians, of the conversation between Bruce and Wallace over the Carron river, is equally apocryphal. There is full evidence that Bruce was not at that time on the English side, nor present at the battle of Falkirk, nay, that he acted as a guardian of Scotland, along with John Comyn, in the name of Baliol, and in opposition to the English. He was the grandson of the competitor, with whom he has been sometimes confounded.

178 **burly fare** grand feastings

179 **Clifford** (II 464) was given estates of Bruce in England (Durham), but was not at Turnberry Castle. See on v 779

205 **Sleate**, or **Slate**, is the southernmost peninsula of Skye, in which lies Armadale, the seat of that Sir Alex Macdonald, visited by Johnson and Boswell. Lord Macdonald is now the great laird of these parts.

224 **winged** refers, says Mr Mackenzie, to the usual derivation of the name from the Gaelic *squath*, 'a wing' (pronounced Skye) suggested by its shape. Another, and more probable derivation (he adds) is from Scand *skt*, 'cloud,' whence the familiar *Eilean Skinnach*, 'the misty island.' Cf II 295

237 **Coolin**. See on I 341

246 See map. **Strathnardull** is an old form of Strathaird, or Strath. **Dunskye** is Dunscaith (IV 161), a small fortified place on Loch Eisdor (Eishort). The following long but interesting quotation from his *Diary* is given by Scott:

'The western coast of Sky is highly romantic, and at the same time displays a richness of vegetation in the lower grounds to which we have hitherto been strangers. We passed three salt water lochs or deep embayments, called Loch Bracadale, Loch

Einort, and Loch (Brittle?), and about 11 o'clock opened Loch Slavig. We were now under the western termination of the high ridge of mountains called Cuillen, or Quillin, or Coolin, whose weather beaten and serrated peaks we had admired at a distance from Dunvegan. They sunk here upon the sea, but with the same bold and peremptory aspect which their distant appearance indicated. They appeared to consist of precipitous sheets of naked rock, down which the torrents were leaping in a hundred lines of foam. The tops of the ridge, apparently inaccessible to human foot, were rent and split into the most tremendous pinnacles. Towards the base of these bare and precipitous crags the ground, enriched by the soil washed down from them, is comparatively verdant and productive. Where we passed within the small isle of Soa, we entered Loch Slavig, under the shoulder of one of these grisly mountains, and observed that the opposite side of the loch was of a milder character, the mountains being softened down into steep green declivities. From the bottom of the bay advanced a headland of high rocks, which divided its depth into two recesses, from each of which a brook issued. Here it had been intimated to us we would find some romantic scenery, but we were uncertain up which inlet we should proceed in search of it. We chose, against our better judgment, the southerly dip of the bay, where we saw a house which might afford us information. We found, upon enquiry, that there is a lake adjoining to each branch of the bay, and walked a couple of miles to see that near the farm house, merely because the honest highlander seemed jealous of the honour of his own loch, though we were speedily convinced it was not that which we were recommended to examine. It had no particular merit, excepting from its neighbourhood to a very high cliff, or precipitous mountain, otherwise the sheet of water had nothing differing from any ordinary low country lake. We returned and re-embarked in our boat, for our guide shook his head at our proposal to climb over the peninsula, or rocky headland which divided the two lakes. In rowing round the headland, we were surprised at the infinite number of sea fowl, then busy apparently with a shoal of fish.

'Arrived at the depth of the bay, we found that the discharge from this second lake forms a sort of waterfall, or rather a rapid stream, which rushes down to the sea with great fury and precipitation. Round this place were assembled hundreds of trouts and salmon, struggling to get up into the fresh water with a net we might have had twenty salmon at a haul, and a sailor, with no better hook than a crooked pin, caught a dish of trouts during our absence. Advancing up this huddling and riotous brook, we found ourselves in a most extraordinary scene, we lost sight of the sea almost immediately after we had climbed over a low ridge of crags, and were surrounded by mountains of

naked rock, of the boldest and most precipitous character. The ground on which we walked was the margin of a lake, which seemed to have sustained the constant ravage of torrents from these rude neighbours. The shores consisted of huge strata of naked granite, here and there intermixed with bogs and heaps of gravel and sand piled in the empty water courses. Vegetation there was little or none, and the mountains rose so perpendicularly from the water edge, that Borrowdale, or even Glencoe, is a jest to them. We proceeded a mile and a half up this deep, dark, and solitary lake, which was about two miles long, half a mile broad, and is, as we learned, of extreme depth. The murky vapours which enveloped the mountain ridges, obliged us by assuming a thousand varied shapes, changing their drapery into all sorts of forms, and sometimes clearing off altogether. It is true, the mist made us pay the penalty by some heavy and downright showers, from the frequency of which a Highland boy, whom we brought from the farm, told us the lake was popularly called the Water Kettle. The proper name is Loch Corriskin (or Coruisk) from the deep corrie, or hollow, in the mountains of Cuillin, which affords the basin for this wonderful sheet of water. It is as exquisite a savage scene as Loch Katrine is a scene of romantic beauty. After having penetrated so far as distinctly to observe the termination of the lake under an immense precipice, which rises abruptly from the water, we returned, and often stopped to admire the ravages which storms must have made in these recesses, where all human witnesses were driven to places of more shelter and security. Stones, or rather large masses and fragments of rocks of a composite kind perfectly different from the strata of the lake, were scattered upon the bare rocky beach, in the strangest and most precarious situations, as if abandoned by the torrents which had borne them down from above. Some lay loose and tottering upon the ledges of the natural rock, with so little security, that the slightest push moved them, though their weight might exceed many tons. These detached rocks, or stones, were chiefly what is called plum pudding stones. The bare rocks, which formed the shore of the lakes, were a species of granite. The opposite side of the lake seemed quite pathless and inaccessible, as a huge mountain, one of the detached ridges of the Cuillin hills, sinks in a profound and perpendicular precipice down to the water. On the left hand side, which we traversed, rose a higher and equally inaccessible mountain, the top of which strongly resembled the shivered crater of an exhausted volcano. I never saw a spot in which there was less appearance of vegetation of any kind. The eye rested on nothing but barren and naked crags, and the rocks on which we walked by the side of the loch were as bare as the pavements of Cheapside. There are one or two small islets in the loch, which seem to bear juniper, or some

such low bushy shrub Upon the whole, though I have seen many scenes of more extensive desolation, I never witnessed any in which it pressed more deeply upon the eye and the heart than at Loch Corriskin, at the same time that its grandeur elevated and redeemed it from the wild and dreary character of utter barrenness'

271 **Clombe** Cf 'Till clombe the horned moon' (*Ancient Mariner*) For **halidom**, see *Vocab*

289 *seq* A **Benmore**, or 'big mountain,' is to be found in Mull and other parts of Scotland, but Scott probably means the Ben more *par excellence* in S W Perthshire, about 3500 feet high Glencioe leads from Lochlong head to the head of Loch Fyne Ben Cruachan is to the E of Loch Etive in Aigyleshire

294 Lockhart's note on this passage is interesting, seeing that his 'Mr Turner' (whose illustrations of Scott's poems are to be found in Messrs Black's editions) is now held to be one of the greatest of landscape painters 'If the opinion,' says Lockhart, 'of Mr Turner be worth anything, "no words could have given a truer picture of this, one of the wildest of Nature's landscapes" Mr Turner adds, however, that he dissents in one particular but for *one or two* tufts of grass he must have broken his neck, having slipped when trying to attain the best position for taking the view'

315 'Loggans, or 'rocking stones,' are generally erratic blocks that have been deposited 'chance poised and balanced' by glaciers In other cases huge blocks are found delicately poised on the lofty spires formed by the washing away of the soil, as with the wonderful 'pyramides' in the valley of Evolena, Switzerland

342 **Cuchullin** was the Achilles of old Irish hero epics The Cuilins, or Cuilins, of Skye have probably no connexion with him Some connect the name with an old Gaelic hero, Culann

351 2 By 'Torquil's Maids' Scott means 'MacLeod's Maidens,' which are known to all who have crossed from Oban to Dunvegan They are three 'columnal rocks,' as Boswell calls them, rising abruptly out of the sea close to the W coast of Skye Anyone who knows 'Rorie's Nurse' will smile at Scott's exaggeration It is a very unassuming little waterfall of about 20 feet, close to Dunvegan Castle, called so because Rorie More—the 'Great Rorie,' a forbear of the present Macleods, knighted by James VI—used to be lulled to sleep by its sound

354 **Corryvrekan**, *Corrievrechan*, properly Corrie breachan, means the 'foam flecked cauldron, or whirlpool' (*Breachdan*, 'speckled' or 'varicoloured,' is the Gael for a tartan) It is a narrow strait between Jura and the island Scorba, where the tide

rushes in at 18 knots an hour and forms dangerous currents The spray thrown up in stormy weather in Corrievreckan is called the Hag's Hood' Cf iv 290

360 Critics object to Scott's moralisings Ruskin, who praises him for not indulging in the 'pathetic fallacy,' allows that he sometimes gives us moralisings 'for the most part shallow, partly insincere, and—as far as sincere—sorrowful' But in the third canto of *Childe Harold*, which appeared in 1816, Byron paid Scott the flattery of using the main idea of this passage The stanza (45) is quoted by Lockhart and other editors

400 'The story,' says Scott, 'of Bruce's meeting the banditti is copied from a striking incident in the monarch's history, told by Barbour It is the sequel to the adventure of the bloodhound, narrated in a former note' (II 611) The quotation from Barbour is too long to reproduce here It relates how the king and his foster brother, having escaped from their pursuers, met three men who said they were seeking Bruce He offers to guide them They reach a cottage, where, during the night, they attack and kill his foster brother, but are all three slain by the king

405 *seq* For brogue, trews, plaid, caitiff, see Vocab M^r Mac kenzie tells us that in Bruce's day the kilt and plaid, as worn now, did not exist The old dress was a yellow shirt, a plaid, hose (sometimes), and brogues Bonnets were rare, and the lowest class often wore jackets of deer or goat skin

427 fallow See Vocab

441 St George's cross is the upright red cross on a white ground which in the 'Union Jack' is combined with the saltire of St Andrew (white on blue) and the saltire of St Patrick (red on white) See iv 321, v 777 St George of Cappadocia (says Mr Jameson) was chosen by Richard I as his patron saint when in Palestine, and since that time has been the patron saint of England For blazon see Vocab

484 For rote and viol see Vocab

492 A crone evidently Morag—for the reader will have recognised the 'slender boy' in 'masquers' quaint attire' (v 582) and close cropped dark hair (cf vi 45)

497 Cf 'Him listid ease his battle steed' (*Marmion*, I 108)

566 selle See Vocab *Placed* seems to be in apposition to *him*—a rather questionable construction (cf I 76) If not, we must take *selle* as the seat or dais of the ladies who distributed the prizes See on II 343 and cf iv 308

588 roses This seems to be an anachronism For Scotland's Cross see on I 441

600 The following description is highly, and justly, praised by critics 'Young Allan's turn to watch comes last, which gives the poet the opportunity of marking in the most natural and happy manner that insensible transition from the reality of waking thoughts to the fanciful visions of slumber which so blends the confines of these separate states as to deceive and sport with the efforts even of determined vigilance' (*British Critic*, Feb 1815)

613 The boy is thinking of how at the present time (it being Easter tide) the Easter festivities are being spent at his home *Dan* (like *Don*, a short form of Lat *dominus*) was a title applied especially to monks, but also to other persons (as 'Dan Arcite' in Chaucer) *Dan Joseph* must, I think, be St Joseph, whose fête is on March 19th, and by his 'lengthened mass' is probably meant that his fête was followed by several holidays

617 **twilight flake** is an unusual expression It may mean the first thin *film* of light spreading over the dark water, but from 1 460, and Spenser's 'flake of lightning,' it is more probably the first *glint* of the waves

630 **Strathaird**, see 1 246 The Spar Cave, says Black's *Guide*, recedes for some 160 ft into the solid rock 'It is rather disappointing, whatever beauties were discernible in the days of Sir Walter Scott The encrusted frostwork and stalactites have mostly disappeared' Scott gives an enthusiastic description in his *Diary*, of which the following extract may suffice 'Imagination can hardly conceive anything more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Alexander Mac Allister, Esq., of Strathaird The first entrance to this celebrated cave is rude and unpromising, but the light of the torches with which we were provided was soon reflected from the roof, floor, and walls, which seem as if they were sheeted with marble, partly smooth, partly rough with frostwork and rustic ornaments, and partly seeming to be wrought into statuary The floor forms a steep and difficult ascent, and might be fancifully compared to a sheet of water, which, while it rushed whitening and foaming down a declivity, had been suddenly arrested and consolidated by the spell of an enchanter Upon attaining the summit of this ascent, the cave opens into a splendid gallery, adorned with the most dazzling crystallizations, and finally descends with rapidity to the brink of a pool, of the most limpid water, about four or five yards broad There opens beyond this pool a portal arch, formed by two columns of white spar, with beautiful chasing upon the sides, which promises a continuation of the cave The pool, on the brink of which we stood, surrounded by the most fanciful mouldings, in a substance resembling white marble, and distinguished by the depth and purity of its waters, might have been

the bathing grotto of a naiad The groups of combined figures projecting, or embossed, by which the pool is surrounded, are exquisitely elegant and fanciful A statuary might catch beautiful hints from the singular and romantic disposition of those stalactites'

688 **Cormac Doil** See l 62 and v 585

714 **wroke** wreaked, avenged See Vocab

721 **Donagaile** In describing his passage through the Sound of Mull, Scott says 'Past the ruins of a small fortalice called Donagaile, situated as usually on a precipice overhanging the sea' (on the shore of Morven)

732 See on l 358

CANTO IV

2 **Caledon** Cf *Lady of the Lake*, i 10 'In ancient Caledon' The word is perhaps Celtic, meaning wooded lands

21 There are several lochs in connexion with Loch Rannoch in N W Perthshire Rannoch Mun (Moor) is a dreary plateau *Glencoe*, by Loch Leven (an estuary in Loch Linnhe), is well known for the massacre of the MacIans, a branch of the Macdonald clan, in 1692

24 **Loch Eribol** on the north coast of Sutherlandshire

42 **Lennox** The estates of Malcolm, Earl of Lennox (to the E of Loch Lomond), had been given by Edward I to Sir John Menteith (see on II 478) Lennox was one of the few who remained faithful to Bruce, and received him after the rout at Methven

45 **Teviotdale** is in Roxburghshire Walter (or some say James), 'the Stewart' (ancestor of the Stuarts), was at this time in exile (see on vi 287) He and Douglas afterwards commanded the centre of the Scotch army at Bannockburn For **Douglas**, see on VI 23 and II 568

48 51 For Brodick Bay and Cairick Strand, see Canto v

55 In reality Edward I died some 3 months later See *Intro*, p xxi n

64 'The generosity,' says Scott, 'which does justice to the character of an enemy often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour'. He cites a case where Bruce speaks of three of his followers who had been hired to assassinate him, and whom he killed in self defence, as 'worthy men all three, had they not been full of treason'

73 The Archbishop of Canterbury had a palace at Croydon, and possibly this made Scott choose the expression, but a friend suggests that probably *Croydon* is a slip for *Croyland* (or *Crowland*), the celebrated centre of monastic life in the English fen country

78 Scott has the following long but interesting note Compare *Introd.*, p. xxi

‘In 1307, Edward, though exhausted by a long and wasting malady, put himself at the head of the army destined to destroy him utterly This was, perhaps, partly in consequence of a vow which he had taken upon him, with all the pomp of chivalry, upon the day in which he dubbed his son a knight, for which see a subsequent note But even his spirit of vengeance was unable to restore his exhausted strength He reached Burgh upon Sands, a petty village of Cumberland, on the shores of the Solway Firth, and there, July 6, 1307, expired in sight of the detested and devoted country of Scotland His dying injunctions to his son required him to continue the Scottish war, and never to recall Gaveston Edward II disobeyed both charges Yet more to mark his animosity, the dying monarch ordered his bones to be carried with the invading army Froissart, who probably had the authority of eyewitnesses, has given us the following account of this remarkable charge

“In the said forest, the old King Robert of Scotland dyd kepe hymselfe, whan Kyng Edward the Fyrst conquered nygh all Scotland, for he was so often chased, that none durst loge him in castell, nor fortresse, for feare of the said Kyng

“And ever whan the King was returned into Ingland, than he would gather together agayn his people, and conquere townes, castells, and fortresses, ruste to Berwick, some by battle, and some by fair speech and love, and when the said King Edward heard thereof, than would he assemble his power, and wyn the realme of Scotland again, thus the chance went between these two foresaid Kings It was shewed me, how that this King Robert wan and lost his realme v times So this continued till the said King Edward died at Berwick and when he saw that he should die, he called before him his eldest son, who was King after him and there, before all the barones, he caused him to swear, that as soon as he were dead, that he should take his body, and boyle it in a cauldron, till the flesh departed clean from the bones, and than to bury the flesh, and keep still the bones, and that as often as the Scotts should rebell against him, he should assemble the people against them, and cary with him the bones of his father, for he believed verily, that if they had his bones with them, that the Scotts should never attain any victory against them The which thing was not accomplished, for when the King died his son carried him to London”—*BERNERS’ FROISSART’S Chronicle*, London, 1812, pp. 39, 40

'Edward's commands were not obeyed, for he was interred in Westminster Abbey, with the appropriate inscription

'EDUARDUS PRIMUS SCOTORUM MALLEUS HIC LSI
PACTUM SERVA "1

'Yet some steps seem to have been taken towards rendering his body capable of occasional transportation, for it was exquisitely embalmed, as was ascertained when his tomb was opened some years ago Edward II judged wisely in not carrying the dead body of his father into Scotland, since he would not obey his living counsels'

84 lair See Vocab

93 Compare the execrations poured on the 'first Edward' by Gray's *Bard*. Certainly the 'ruthless king' was not a foe to be respected, but surely Edward Bruce's passionate words might have satisfied what an editor well calls the 'ferocious patriotism' of Jeffrey and other such critics, who abused Scott as soundly as if he had been a pro Boer for following in the footsteps of Homer and not representing *all* his heroes as inspired with that 'animosity towards England, and that exultation over her defeat which must have animated all Scotland at the period to which he refers, and which ought consequently to have been the ruling passion of his poem'. 'Mr Scott,' Jeffrey adds, 'not only dwells fondly on the valour and generosity of the invaders, but actually makes an elaborate apology to the English for having ventured to select for his theme a story which records their disasters'. Another writer (in the *Critical Review*), quoted by Lockhart, says 'Bruce was unquestionably of a temper never surpassed for its humanity, munificence, and nobleness (!), yet, to represent him feeling an instant's compassion for the sudden fate of a miscreant like this, is, we are compelled to say, so unnatural a violation of truth and decency, not to say patriotism, that we are really astonished that the author could have conceived the idea, much more that he could suffer his pen to record it. This wretched abasement on the part of The Bruce is further heightened by the king's half reprehension of Prince Edward's noble and stern expression of undying hatred against his country's spoiler and his family's assassin'.

104 De la Haye See on II 481 This is the son See I 490

105 Sir Robert Boyd, ancestor of the Earls of Kilmarnock, was one of Bruce's staunchest adherents

114 16 The long chain formed by the 200 islands (N and S Uist among them) of the Outer Hebrides goes by the name 'Long

¹ *Edward the First, the Hammer of the Scots, is here Keep Faith* The last words were Edward's motto *Malleus* is evidently borrowed from Charles Martel, 'Hammer of the Saracens'

Island ' The Minch parts it from the mainland and the Inner Hebrides

132 5 coronach, pibroch See Vocab

136 Donagaile III 721

147 Ben na darch, or Beinn Darg (' Red mountain '), is by Loch Slapin

161 Dunscaith See on III 246 Caviggarriagh, or Calligarry, is a headland on the S E coast of Sleat

187 See II 298 ' The little island of Canna, or Cannay,' says Scott, ' adjoins to those of Rum and Muick In a pretty bay opening towards the east there is a lofty and slender rock detached from the shore Upon the summit are the ruins of a very small tower, scarcely accessible by a steep and precipitous path Here it is said one of the kings, or Lord of the Isles, confined a beautiful lady, of whom he was jealous The ruins are of course haunted by her restless spirit, and many romantic stories are told by the aged people of the island concerning her fate in life, and her appearances after death '

217 Ronin an old name for Rum, ' a name,' says Scott, ' which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding, if possible '

225 Scooreigg the *scur* or *sgur* (crag) of Egg ' A lofty ridge of basaltic lava poured from some neighbouring volcano '—MACKENZIE Black's *Guide* gives a picture of it The following extract from Scott's *Diary* gives a full account of the tragedy briefly related in lines 226 240

' August 26, 1814 —At seven this morning we were in the Sound which divides the Isle of Rum from that of Egg The latter, although hilly and rocky, and traversed by a remarkably high and barren ridge, called Scoor Rigg, has, in point of soil, a much more promising appearance Southward of both lies the Isle of Muick, or Muck, a low and fertile island, and though the least, yet probably the most valuable of the three We manned the boat, and rowed along the shore of Egg in quest of a cavern which had been the memorable scene of a horrid feudal vengeance We had rounded more than half the island, admiring the entrance of many a bold natural cave, which its rocks exhibited, without finding that which we sought, until we procured a guide Nor, indeed, was it surprising that it should have escaped the search of strangers, as there are no outward indications more than might distinguish the entrance of a fox-earth This noted cave has a very narrow opening, through which one could hardly creep on his knees and hands It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 measured feet, the height at the entrance may be about three feet, but rises within to eighteen or twenty, and the breadth may vary in the

same proportion The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewn with the bones of men, women, and children, the sad relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island, 200 in number, who were slain on the following occasion The Mac Donalds of the Isle of Egg, a people dependent on Clan Ranald, had done some injury to the Laird of MacLeod The tradition of the isle says that it was by a personal attack on the chieftain, in which his back was broken But that of the other isles bears, more probably, that the injury was offered to two or three of the MacLeods, who, landing upon Egg, and using some freedom with the young women, were seized by the islanders, bound hand and foot, and turned adrift in a boat, which the wind and waves safely conducted to Skye To avenge the offence given, MacLeod sailed with such a body of men as rendered resistance hopeless The natives, fearing his vengeance, concealed themselves in this cavern, and, after a strict search, the MacLeods went on board their galleys, after doing what mischief they could, concluding the inhabitants had left the isle, and betaken themselves to the Long Island, or some of Clan Ranald's other possessions But next morning they espied from the vessels a man upon the island, and immediately landing again, they traced his retreat by the marks of his footsteps, a light snow being unhappily on the ground MacLeod then surrounded the cavern, summoned the subterranean garrison, and demanded that the individuals who had offended him should be delivered up to him This was peremptorily refused The chieftain then caused his people to divert the course of a rill of water, which, falling over the entrance of the cave, would have prevented his purposed vengeance He then kindled at the entrance of the cavern a huge fire, composed of turf and fern, and maintained it with unrelenting assiduity until all within were destroyed by suffocation The date of this dreadful deed must have been recent, if one may judge from the fresh appearance of those relics I brought off, in spite of the prejudice of our sailors, a skull from among the numerous specimens of mortality which the cavern afforded Before re-embarking we visited another cave, opening to the sea, but of a character entirely different, being a large open vault as high as that of a cathedral, and running back a great way into the rock at the same height The height and width of the opening gives ample light to the whole Here, after 1745, when the Catholic priests were scarcely tolerated, the priest of Egg used to perform the Roman Catholic service, most of the islanders being of that persuasion A huge ledge of rocks rising about half way up one side of the vault, served for altar and pulpit, and the appearance of a priest and Highland congregation in such an extraordinary place of worship, might have engaged the pencil of Salvator

241 'And also Merrily, merrily goes the bard,' exclaims a reviewer with whom some readers may agree, 'in a succession of *merriment* which, like Dogberry's tediousness, he finds it in his heart to bestow wholly and entirely on us through page after page' (*Monthly Review*, 1815)

248 'Nothing,' says Scott, 'can be more interesting than the varied appearance of the little archipelago of islets of which Staffa is the most remarkable. This group, called in Gaelic Tresharnish (Treshnish), affords a thousand varied views to the voyager.' In 1810 he had visited the so called Fingal's Cave in Staffa, and had been greatly impressed. But in his *Diary* of 1814 he writes 'I am not sure whether I was not more affected by this second, than by the first view of it. The stupendous columnar side walls—the depth and strength of the ocean with which the cavern is filled—the variety of tints formed by stalactites dropping and petrifying between the pillars, and resembling a sort of chasing of yellow or cream coloured marble filling the interstices of the roof—the corresponding variety below, where the ocean rolls over a red, and in some places a violet coloured rock, the basis of the basaltic pillars—the dreadful noise of those august billows so well corresponding with the grandeur of the scene—are all circumstances elsewhere unparalleled.'

Staffa was 'all unknown' not only in Bruce's age (except perhaps to a few neighbouring islanders) but up to the year 1772, when it was visited by Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, and by him brought into notice. Johnson and Boswell visited Iona in 1773 and were prevented from visiting Staffa by the weather. They do not mention Fingal's Cave, though they must have known of its existence. (By the way the course of Dr Johnson and Boswell from Skye to Iona, was somewhat similar to that of Bruce and Ronald, though things didn't go quite so smoothly and 'merrily'.)

276 See Vocab. The wind has shifted a bit to the west since line 242

285 *Lochbuie*, in \$ Mull. '*Buy* in Erse,' says Boswell, 'signifies yellow, and I at first imagined that the loch was thus denominated in the same manner'—he doesn't say what manner—'as the Red Sea, but I afterwards learned that it derived its name from a hill above it, which being of a yellowish hue, has the epithet of *Buy*'. Of the descendant of Scott's 'fierce and warlike Lord' Boswell says 'We had heard much of Lochbuy's being a great roaring braggadocio, a kind of Sir John Falstaff, both in size and manners—but he proved to be only a bluff, comely, noisy old gentleman, proud of his hereditary consequence.'

299 **Leyden** was a friend of Scott's, who wrote a memoir of his life. In his note Scott says 'The ballad *The Ballad of Colonsay and the Mermaid of Corrieveich*—now called *Scott's Border Minstrelsy*—' was composed by John Leyden from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801, soon before his fatal departure for India, where, after having made further progress in Oriental literature than any man of letters who had embraced those studies, he died a martyr to his zeal for knowledge in the island of Java, in August, 1811'. He went out to Madras as surgeon.

305 **Tarbat** now usually (if Pennant's derivation is right, wrongly) spelt Tarbert, although the isthmus between Loch Lomond and Loch Long is 'Taibet'. Scott gives the following note 'The peninsula of Cantyre is joined to South Knapdale by a very narrow isthmus, formed by the western and eastern Loch of Tarbat. These two saltwater lakes, or bays, encroach so far upon the land, and the extremities come so near to each other, that there is not above a mile of land to divide them.

"It is not long," says Pennant, "since vessels of nine or ten tons were drawn by horses out of the west loch into that of the east, to avoid the dangers of the Mull of Cantyre, so dreaded and so little known was the navigation round that promontory. It is the opinion of many, that these little isthmuses, so frequently styled Taibat in North Britain, took their name from the above circumstance, Tarruing, signifying to draw, and Bata, a boat. This too might be called, by way of preeminence, the Taibat, from a very singular circumstance related by Torfæus. When Magnus, the barefooted King of Norway, obtained from Donaldbane of Scotland the cession of the Western Isles, or all those places that could be surrounded in a boat, he added to them the peninsula of Cantyre by this fraud, he placed himself in the stern of a boat, held the rudder, was drawn over this narrow track, and by this species of navigation wrested the country from his brother monarch."—PENNANT'S *Scotland*.

'But that Bruce also made this passage, although at a period two or three years later than in the poem, appears from the evidence of Barbour, who mentions also the effect produced upon the minds of the Highlanders from the prophecies current amongst them'—SCOTT.

314 **selcouth** See Vocab.

318 *veg* **Kilmaconnel** spelt Kilcalmenell in Black's *Guide For Albyn* see Vocab, and for **silver Cross** see on III 441.

328 '**Loch Ranza** is,' says Scott, 'a beautiful bay on the northern extremity of Arian, opening towards East Tarbet Loch', and 'Ben Chaon, the Mountain of the Winds, is generally known by its English, and less poetical name of Goatfield (Goatfell).'

338 *sheen* is here surely the noun, as in Byron's 'the sheen of their spears' The word is also used as adjective 'faire and sheene' (Spenser)

366 *band* used (for sake of rhyme) instead of 'bond,' covenant

374 Seeing that the betrothal (under the old Highland customs almost equivalent to marriage) had already taken place

376 See on II 464

381 Roland, it must be supposed, entered the lists under this title, *Rock* perhaps standing for 'rocky Isle' See on II 343 and III 566

385 See on II 481

392 *St Bride*, or *Bright* (*Bridget*), was an Irish saint of the 5th century The convent is placed by Scott (and also by Black's *Guide*—with what authority I do not know) in the hills not far from Loch Ranza, though *Kilbride*, 'St Bride's cell or burial place,' is by Lamlash, in E Arran Others give it on S coast

424 *holt* See Vocab

450 *seq* For the 'good Lord James (Douglas),' De la Haye, and Lennox, see IV 42, 45, 104, etc

'The passage in Barbour,' says Scott, 'describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognized by Douglas and those of his followers who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting —The king arrived in Arran with thirty three small row boats He interrogated a female if there had arrived any warlike men of late in that country "Surely, sir," she replied, "I can tell you of many who lately came hither, discomfited the English governor, and blockaded his castle at Brodick They maintained themselves in a wood at no great distance" The king, truly conceiving that this must be Douglas and his followers, who had lately set forth to try their fortune in Arran, desired the woman to conduct him to the wood She obeyed

'The king then blew his horn on high,
And gert his men that were him by,
Hold them still, and all privy,
And syne again his hoine blew he
James of Dowglas heard him blow,
And at the last alone gan know
And said, "Soothly yon is the king
I know long while since his blowing"
The third time therewithall he blew,
And then Sir Robert Boid it knew,

And said, "Yon is the king but deid,¹
 Go we forth till him, better speed"
 Then went they till the king in hie,
 And him inclined courteously
 And blithly welcomed them the king,
 And was joyful of their meeting,
 And kissed them, and speked² syne
 How they had fared in hunting³
 And they him told all but lesing⁴
 Syne laud they God of their meeting
 Syne with the king till his harbourye⁴
 Went both joyfu' and jolly'

BARBOUR'S *Bruce*, Book v 115, 116

479 **red hair'd Dane** Mr Mackenzie says that the word Fin gall means 'fair strangers,' and Dubh gall (whence Mac Dougall) means 'dark strangers,' the latter name being usually applied to the Danes. Possibly, on this account, Scott uses 'red haired' instead of 'yellow-haired'—unless he does so merely because it does not suit his metre. The Norsemen under Haco were defeated by the Scots at Largs, on the Firth of Clyde, in 1263, and lost their supremacy over the Western Isles

483 *seq* For these names, see Index

490 See on l 104

491 **Boyd** see on l 105 **Seton** not, of course, the Christopher Seton of II 482, nor John, his brother, who was executed about the same time, perhaps Alexander Seton, who is said to have saved Bruce's life at Methven (Tytler however says this was Christopher)

497 **brunt** See Vocab

513, 514 An editor (Mr Mackenzie) thinks that these lines perhaps refer to the fact that 'a portion of the *Lady of the Lake* was read, shortly after publication, by Sir Adam Ferguson to soldiers under fire in the lines of Torres Vedras'

528 Scott cites various facts related by Barbour which show the 'kind but fiery character of Edward Bruce'

538 *seq* For **mien**, **rosary**, **gauds**, see Vocab

560 **battled** with battlements, as I 576 The following interesting note is given by Mr Mackenzie 'There is little trustworthy evidence as to Bruce's personal appearance. The profiles on the coins cannot be taken seriously. All indeed that we have of any precision occurs in the *Historia Majoris Britanniae* (John Major, 13th cent.) as follows "His figure was graceful and athletic, with broad shoulders, his features were handsome, he had the yellow hair of the northern race, with blue and

¹ without doubt

² asked

³ without leasing

⁴ to his lodging

sparkling eyes " The bones discovered in digging the foundation for a new church on the site of Dunfermline Abbey, suspected with every reason to be those of the renowned Robert, indicate a man about six feet high ' According to this account, Scott's 'jet black locks' and 'dignity of eye' give a wrong idea

581 2 During the whole of these two sections the thing has been *just* saved from melodramatic absurdity by a certain refinement and dignity in expression—and at the very last moment comes this couplet !

588 For **pallet, pall, beads**, see Vocab The **zone of hair** would be a rough hair belt worn next to the skin for penance

597 Robert Bruce's great grandfather, Robert Bruce, fourth Lord of Annandale, married Isabel, second daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon (see *Introd*, p xv n), who was a grandson of David I (1124-1153) Though never canonised by the Pope, David I was regarded as a saint on account of the numerous religious establishments founded by him

623 See II 343, III 566, IV 381

658 **Mind not his tears** Even readers who have by this time convinced themselves of the identity of the mute page and the forlorn Maid of Lorn will find it difficult to not 'mind' her tiresome and silly habit of bursting into tears at every available opportunity (see from I 221 onwards) That a woman with any self respect should not only continue to shed tears on every occasion, but should still wish to marry, and finally should actually marry, a man who had acted like this precious Lord of the Isles, may be a poetic possibility—but somehow one doesn't accept it comfortably Scott is no Shakespeare, he does not compel our belief, as it is compelled, for instance in that scene of extraordinary lovemaking between Richard and Lady Anne (*Rich III*, I ii) However, seven years elapse between Cantos v and vi, and much can happen in seven years without the aid of a poet

684 'This incident,' says Scott, 'which illustrates so happily the chivalrous generosity of Bruce's character, is one of the many simple and natural traits recorded by Barbour It occurred during the expedition which Bruce made to Ireland to support the pretensions of his brother Edward to the throne of that kingdom' The passage which he cites from Barbour relates the story of the 'poor lavender (laundress)' much as it is given in our text

702 **brooks** *ie* has to brook See Vocab

727 **bower** See Vocab Here perhaps with the sense of 'cage', 'mew'

746 The character of Isabel acts as a foil to that of Edith. It would be a question worth attempting to solve why one feels so much more interest in her ultimate happiness than in that of the nominal heroine of the poem.

761 **beadsman** See Vocab. Here, evidently some old retainer who received a pension for praying for the soul of his late master. For **Turnberry**, see v. xix.

CANTO V

16 **Loch Ranza** IV 328 **Ben Gholl** IV 326

7 **her spindle twirl'd** The ancient method of spinning (in use till the invention of the spinning wheel), was to attach a mass of wool to a distuff and twist several of its fibres into a thread by fastening them to a small bit of weighted wood, the 'spindle,' which was twirled round.

21 **enchased, scroll** See Vocab.

67 Explained by l. 197 See also iv. 155

71 See on l. 658

94 Cf l. 268

114 **piked, palmer** See Vocab.

130 'The interior of the island of Arran abounds with beautiful highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataacts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth. There is one pass over the river Machrae, renowned for the dilemma of a poor woman, who, being tempted by the narrowness of the ravine to step across, succeeded in making the first movement, but took fright when it became necessary to move the other foot, and remained in a posture equally ludicrous and dangerous, until some chance passenger assisted her to extricate herself. It is said she remained there some hours'—SCOTT

133 **cairn, or carn**, in Gaelic means a 'heap.' Scott gives the following note:

'The isle of Arran, like those of Man and Anglesea, abounds with many relics of heathen, and probably Druidical, superstition. There are high erect columns of unhewn stone, the most early of all monuments, the circles of rude stones, commonly entitled Druidical, and the cairns, or sepulchral piles, within which are usually found urns enclosing ashes. Much doubt necessarily rests upon the history of such monuments, nor is it possible to consider them as exclusively Celtic, or Druidical. By much the finest circles of standing stones, excepting Stonehenge, are those of Stenhouse, at Stennis, in the island of Pomona, the principal isle of the Orcades. These, of course, are

neither Celtic nor Druidical, and we are assured that many circles of the kind occur both in Sweden and Norway'

136 See *Gen* xlix 10

137 Cf II 401 I can discover no *Macfarlane's Cross* in Arran or elsewhere It may occur somewhere in Barbour's 14,000 lines

138 hours, *i.e.* the seven canonical hours, for each of which prayers had to be said *Told* = counted, with reference to beads, as in II 403

143 Whether the old castle was 'gothic,' in the ordinary sense of the word, I cannot say (There are a few fine examples of the 'pointed' style in Scotland, *e.g.* Holyrood Chapel and Glasgow Cathedral) The present castle (says Black) is 'a revival of the old castle, enlarged and remodelled'

145 'Brodict or Brathwick Castle, in the Isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodict Bay, and not far distant from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the island of Lamlash This important place had been assailed a short time before Bruce's arrival in the island James Lord Douglas, who accompanied Bruce to his retreat in Rachrine, seems, in the spring of 1306, to have tired of his abode there, and set out accordingly, in the phrase of the times, to see what adventure God would send him Sir Robert Boyd accompanied him, and his knowledge of the localities of Arran appears to have directed his course hither They landed in the island privately, and appear to have laid an ambush for Sir John Hastings, the English governor of Brodict, and surprised a considerable supply of arms and provisions, and nearly took the castle itself Indeed, that they actually did so, has been generally averred by historians, although it does not appear from the narrative of Barbour On the contrary, it would seem that they took shelter within a fortification of the ancient inhabitants, a rampart called *Tor an Schuan* When they were joined by Bruce it seems probable that they had gained Brodict Castle At least tradition says that from the battlements of the tower he saw the supposed signal fire on Turnberry nook'—SCOTT It seems almost certain that Bruce captured neither Brodict nor Turnberry Castle

149 Mr Mackenzie says that according to old legends (he does not say which) Bruce sailed from Whiting Bay, south of Lamlash

154 See on l 217, and sections XIII XI

167 light This may be *lycht* (bright), often used by Barbour (see on l 219) and identical with the old Germ *leht*, 'gleaming,' used so much in the Nibelungenlied as an epithet of helmets and 'harness', but it is generally explained here as 'not so heavy as the armour of a horseman'

171 Scott has here a rather amusing note founded on a false reading, as it seems 'Barboun,' he says, 'with great simplicity, gives an anecdote from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was at this time confined to military men. As Douglas, after Bruce's return to Scotland, was roving about the mountainous country of Tweeddale, he chanced to hear some persons in a farm house say "*the devil*"'. Concluding from this hasty expression that the house contained wailike guests, he immediately assailed it, and had the good fortune to make prisoners Thomas Randolph, afterwards the famous Earl of Murray, and Alexander Stuart, Lord Bonkle. Both were then in the English interest, and had come into that country with the purpose of driving out Douglas. They afterwards ranked among Bruce's most zealous adherents'.

In later editions of Barboun's *Bruce* this passage has been emended as follows 'herd thar sawis ilka dele,' which being interpreted is merely 'heard their sayings every whit'. So the anecdote loses its value as evidence that only soldiers were in that age 'full of strange oaths'.

164 **hauberk** See Vocab

195 **St Giles** (Gk *Agudios*, cf. on II 37) is said to have been an Athenian of royal descent. He fled from his country and lived as hermit near the mouth of the Rhone. A magnificent monastery, the Abbey of Saint Gilles, was built afterwards at this spot. Many (about 150) churches in England were dedicated to him—generally on the outskirts of towns, he being the patron saint of lepers and cripples. 'The parish church of Edinburgh existed under the invocation of St Giles as early as 1359'—MRS JAMFSON

205 See IV 761

217 'The remarkable circumstance,' says Scott, 'by which Bruce was induced to enter Scotland under the false idea that a signal fire was lighted upon the shore near his maternal castle of Turnberry—the disappointment which he met with, and the train of success that arose out of that very disappointment—are too curious to be passed over unnoticed'. He then quotes a very long passage from Barboun's *Bruce* (Bk IV 5 1), some of which I reproduce in a slightly emended form

'This wes in ver,¹ quhen wynter tid,
With his blastis hidwyss to bid,
Was ourdriffin, and byrdis smale,
As thristill and the nyctyngale,
Begouth² rycht meraly to syng,
And for to mak in thair singyng

¹ Spring

² Begun

Syndry notis, and soundis ser,¹
 And melodys plesand to hei ,
 And the treis begouth to ma
 Burgeans,² and biycht blomys alsua,
 To wyn the helyng off thair hewid,
 That wykkyt wyntu had thaim rewid³.
 And all grewis beguth to spriyng
 In to that tyme the nobill king,
 With his flote, and a few menye
 Thre hundyr I trow thar mycht be,
 Wes to the se, owte off Arane
 A litill forouth ewyn⁴ gane
 Thar rowit fast, with all thair mycht,
 Till that apoun thaim fell the nycht,
 That woux myik apoun gret maner,
 Swa that thar wust nocht quhar thei wer
 For thar na nedill had, na stane ,
 Bot rowyt alwayis in till ane,
 Stemmand alwayis apoun the fyr,
 That thar saw brynnand lycht and schyr⁵
 It wes bot auentur⁶ thaim led
 And thar in schoit tyme sa thaim sped,
 That at the fyr aiywyt thar
 And went to land bot mar delay
 And Cuthbert, that has sene the fyr,
 Was full off angyr, and off ire
 For he durst nocht do it away ,
 And wes alsua downtand ay
 That his lord suld pass the se
 Tharfor thar cummyn waytit he ,
 And met thaim at thar aiywing
 He wes wele sone broucht to the King,
 That speryt⁷ at him how he had done
 And he with sar hart tauld him sone
 How that he fand nane weil luffand,⁸
 Bot all war fayis,⁹ that he fand
 And that the lord the Persy,¹⁰
 With ner thre hundre in cumpany,
 Was in the castell thar besid,
 Fullfilyt off dispyt and prid
 Bot ma than twa partis off his rowt
 War herbery¹¹ in the toune without ,

¹ Several (many)² Make buds³ Covering⁴ Bereaved⁵ Before evening⁶ Bright and clear⁷ Adventure, fortune⁸ Asked him⁹ Disposed¹⁰ Foes¹¹ Percy, not Clifford (as in the poem), was really in command at Turnberry¹² Lodged

“ And dyspytyt yow mar, Schir King,
 Than men may dispyt ony thing ”
 Than said the King, in full gret ire
 “ Tratour, quhy maid thow than the fyr ? ”
 “ A ! Schyr,” said he, “ sa God me se ! ”
 The fyr was newyr maid for me
 Na, or the nycht, I wyst it nocht,
 Bot fra I wyst it, weil I thoct
 That ye and haly your menyne,
 In hy¹ suld put yow to the se
 For thi I cum to mete yow hei,
 To tell perellys that may apeil ”
 The King wes off his spek angry,
 And askyt his prywé² men, in hy,
 Quhat at thaim thought wes best to do

236 Noteless, inconspicuous, not likely to attract attention
 Cf III 54

251 chalice See Vocab

258 grace, *z e* grant as a favour

265 fence for ‘defence’

268 See Introd, p xxii, footnote

295 Cumray’s isles known generally as the Great and Little
 Cumbræ See map

310 If the ‘steersman kept the helm aught’ they would have
 steered rather east of south The nautical expression ‘S and
 by W’ was perhaps picked up by Scott on his voyage round
 Scotland in 1814 The compass card shows 32 points, and the
 first of these from S towards W is ‘S and by W’

323 The black cock is a black grouse

326 good my Liege and good my Lord may be explained by
 regarding ‘my Liege’ and ‘my Lord’ (as foreigners do in their
 ‘Milord’) as single words Cf ‘sweet my coz’

340 fiery chain evidently Elijah’s ‘chariot of fire’ (2 Kings,
 11 11)—an example of how Scott pounced on any word when
 hard up for a time ‘Chan’ and ‘chariot’ give two totally
 different pictures (the former surely rather ridiculous), and the
 words have quite different derivations

357 In reference to ‘I make sicker’ See on II 215

378 ware, on the alert

386 See on I 425

393 council should be counsel

¹ Haste

² Proved, trusty

402 Cf VI 589, 'the wild fire from the moss'—i.e. 'will o' the wisp,' called 'spunkie' in Scott's note to l 425, or, rather, a large number of such lights flickering over the surface of a bog 'Sheet lightning is also known in Scotland as *wild fire*'—MACKENZIE

423 **bosk** See Vocab

425 'The following,' says Scott, 'are the words of an ingenious correspondent, to whom I am obliged for much information respecting Turnberry and its neighbourhood "The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick, relates to the fire seen by him from the Isle of Arran. It is still generally reported, and religiously believed by many, that this fire was really the work of supernatural power, unassisted by the hand of any mortal being, and it is said, that, for several centuries, the flame rose yearly on the same hour of the same night of the year, on which the king first saw it from the turrets of Brodick castle, and some go so far as to say, that if the exact time were known, it would be still seen. That this superstitious notion is very ancient, is evident from the place where the fire is said to have appeared, being called the Boggles' Brae, beyond the remembrance of man. In support of this curious belief, it is said that the practice of burning heath for the improvement of land was then unknown, that a spunkie (Jack o'lanthorn) could not have been seen across the breadth of the Firth of Clyde, between Ayrshire and Arran, and that the courier of Bruce was his kinsman, and never suspected of treachery"—Letter from Mr Joseph Train, of Newton Stuart, author of an ingenious Collection of Poems, illustrative of many ancient Traditions in Galloway and Ayrshire, Edinburgh, 1814' Mr Train, says Lockhart, made a journey into Ayrshire at Sir Walter Scott's request, on purpose to collect accurate information for the Notes to this poem, and the reader will find more of the fruits of his labours in Note to l 779 *infra*. This is the same gentleman whose friendly assistance is so often acknowledged in the Notes and Introductions to the Waverley Novels

449 See III 479, v 587

455 **Clan Colla** is the Clan Donald, or Macdonald See on I 197

467 Cf *Marmion*, I 3, 'gazing down the steepy linn'

475 'The Castle of Turnberry,' says Scott, 'on the coast of Ayrshire, was the property of Robert Bruce in right of his mother. Lord Hailes mentions the following remarkable circumstance concerning the mode in which he became proprietor of it "Martha, Countess of Carrick in her own right, the wife of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, bare him a son, afterwards

Robert I (July 11, 1274) The circumstances of her marriage were singular happening to meet Robert Bruce in her domains, she became enamoured of him, and with some violence led him to her castle of Turnberry. A few days after she married him, without the knowledge of the relations of either party, and without the requisite consent of the king. The king instantly seized her castle and whole estates she afterwards atoned by a fine for her feudal delinquency. Little did Alexander foresee, that, from this union, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy was to arise"—*Annals of Scotland*, vol II p 180. The same obliging correspondent, whom I have quoted in the Note to l 427 *ante*, gives me the following account of the present state of the ruins of Turnberry,—“Turnberry Point is a rock projecting into the sea, the top of it is about eighteen feet above high water mark. Upon this rock was built the castle. There is about twenty five feet high of the wall next to the sea yet standing. Upon the land side the wall is only about four feet high, the length has been sixty feet, and the breadth forty five. It was surrounded by a ditch, but that is now nearly filled up. The top of the ruin, rising between forty and fifty feet above the water, has a majestic appearance from the sea. There is not much local tradition in the vicinity connected with Bruce or his history. In front, however, of the rock, upon which stands Culzean Castle, is the mouth of a romantic cavern, called the Cove of Colean, in which it is said Bruce and his followers concealed themselves immediately after landing, till they arranged matters for their farther enterprises. Burns mentions it in the poem of Hallow e'en. The only place to the south of Turnberry worth mentioning, with reference to Bruce's history, is the Weary Nook, a little romantic green hill where he and his party are said to have rested, after assaulting the castle.”

‘Around the Castle of Turnberry was a level plain of about two miles in extent, forming the castle park. There could be nothing, I am informed, more beautiful than the copsewood and verdure of this extensive meadow, before it was invaded by the ploughshare.’

535 **bourne**, see Vocab

556 **lurcher** See Vocab

569 **well known**, because he (John of Lorn) was ‘Amadine’s’ brother

581 **the monk** the Abbot of Iona See III 55 65, III LXIII

585 **Laid them aboard** ran alongside in order to attack them

605 Cf l 455, and on r 197

608 **tartans** See r 616

611 **scathed** decayed or shattered See Vocab and cf II 530, 636

- 649' that moment's strife, *i.e.* the agony of hesitation
- 656 abye See Vocab
- 670 port See Vocab
- 707 sped, despatched Cf *Marmion*, VI 867, 'That sped wound has our master sped', 'I am sped' *Rom and Jul* III 1)
- 710 redoubted (Fr *redoute*), dreaded 'My most redoubted father' (*Henry V*, II iv)
- 738 The warder (I 509, etc) is *accusative* case
- 751 ward See Vocab
- 762 Clifford really fell at Bannockburn See on I 779
- 768 See VI 167 John of Lorn, son of Allaster, fled later to England by sea after the capture of Dunstaffnage (See on I 46) The escape from Turnberry seems suggested by this fact
- 775 donjon See Vocab
- 777 See on III 441, IV 321
- 779 'I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle But the tradition is not accurate The fact is, that he was only strong enough to alarm and drive in the outposts of the English garrison, then commanded, not by Clifford, as assumed in the text, but by Percy Neither was Clifford slain upon this occasion, though he had several skirmishes with Bruce He fell afterwards in the battle of Bannockburn Bruce, after alarming the castle of Turnberry, and surprising some part of the garrison, who were quartered without the walls of the fortress, retreated into the mountainous part of Carrick, and there made himself so strong that the English were obliged to evacuate Turnberry, and at length the Castle of Ayr Many of his benefactions and royal gifts attest his attachment to the hereditary followers of his house, in this part of the country'—SCOTT
- To this note is appended a long account of Robert Bruce's foundation of houses and charities for lepers, he, himself, after the battle of Methven, having suffered from a scorbatic disease which was believed to be leprosy Scott also quotes Mr Train (see on I 425) in *re* 'charter stones,' etc If desired, it can all be found in any edition that gives Scott's notes
- 795 7 Surely this should have been enough for even Jeffrey's 'ferocious patriotism' It degrades Bruce to a pork butcher I remember no such brutality described with such *gusto* in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, or indeed any other recognised poet
- 798 mazers See Vocab In a very long note Scott quotes from an inventory of the chattels of James III in which are mentioned 'Four Mazans, called King Robert the Brocis, with a cover'

815 *seq* The following note is the best commentary 'As soon as it was known in Kyle, says ancient tradition, that Robert Bruce had landed in Carrick, with the intention of recovering the crown of Scotland, the Laird of Craigie and forty eight men in his immediate neighbourhood declared in favour of their legitimate prince Bruce granted them a tract of land, still retained by the freemen of Newton to this day The original charter was lost when the pestilence was raging at Ay1, but it was renewed by one of the Jameses, and is dated at Faulkland

'The forest of Selkirk, or Ettick, at this period occupied all the district which retains that denomination, and embraced the neighbouring dales of Tweeddale, and at least the Upper Ward of Clydesdale All that tract was probably as waste as it is mountainous, and covered with the remains of the ancient Caledonian Forest, which is supposed to have stretched from Cheviot Hills as far as Hamilton, and to have comprehended even a part of Ayrshire At the fatal battle of Falkirk, Sir John Stewart, of Bonkill, brother to the Steward of Scotland, commanded the archers of Selkirk Forest, who fell around the dead body of their leader The English historians have commemorated the tall and stately persons, as well as the unswerving faith of these foresters,'—SCOTT

820 *Reedswair Path*, *i.e.* Red swire (Red slope), a part of Carter Fell, not far from Jedburgh

CANTO VI

In the introductory Spenserian stanzas are described 'the emotions of that spirit rousing time' when the victories won by Wellington in the Peninsular War (six, it is said, in ten months) together with the overthrow of Napoleon's army (October 1813) at Leipzig and the entrance of the allies into Paris on the 30th March, 1814, brought about the abdication of the 'Despot' in April of this year—the year in which Scott composed his poem¹ With the emotions of this period are compared those aroused by the successes of Bruce during the seven years that are supposed to have elapsed since the capture of Turnberry Castle (1307-1314) It is noticeable that Scott wrote his description of Bannockburn exactly 500 years after the battle was fought

14 In 1793, England refusing to acknowledge the 'Convention' as the supreme Government in France, war was declared, and although by the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 peace was nominally made, hostilities were soon after renewed and continued till 1814

¹ Napoleon escaped from Elba early in 1815, and Waterloo was fought on the 18th June, 1815 In October Scott published his poem *The Field of Waterloo*, which was more successful financially than the *Lord of the Isles*,

22 At Loudoun, or Loudon Hill, S E Ayrshire, Bruce gained his first decided success 'The Earl of Pembroke,' says Fraser Tytler, 'advanced into Ayrshire It is said that, in the spirit of the times, Pembroke (Aymer de Valence, who had defeated Bruce at Methven) challenged the Scottish king to give him battle, and that Bruce agreed to meet him at Loudon Hill, on the 10th of May'

The Ury is an affluent of the Don in Aberdeenshire During the winter of 1307 Bruce was in these parts, constantly attacked by Comyn, Earl of Buchan, a relative of the 'Red Comyn' In May, 1308 (or December, 1307) he defeated the Earl at Old Meldrum in the Vale of Ury and 'harried' his lands See *Introduct*, p xxii

23 Douglas dale See II 212, 568, IV 46 The following note by Scott is all the more interesting because of the fact that the last romance written by him was on the subject of this *Castle Dangerous*

'The "good Lord James Douglas," during these commotions, often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains As a reward to his patriotism, it is said to have been prophesied, that how often soever Douglas Castle should be destroyed, it should always again rise more magnificent from its ruins Upon one of these occasions he used fearful cruelty, causing all the store of provisions, which the English had laid up in his castle, to be heaped together, bursting the wine and beer casks among the wheat and flour, slaughtering the cattle upon the same spot, and upon the top of the whole cutting the throats of the English prisoners This pleasantry of the "good Lord James" is commemorated under the name of the *Douglas's Larder* A more pleasing tale of chivalry is recorded by Godscroft "By this means, and such other exploits, he so affrighted the enemy, that it was counted a matter of great jeopardy to keep this castle, which began to be called the *adventurous* (or hazardous) *Castle of Douglas*, where upon Sir John Walton being in suit of an English lady, she wrote to him, that when he had kept the adventurous Castle of Douglas seven years, then he might think himself worthy to be a suitor to her Upon this occasion Walton took upon him the keeping of it, and succeeded to Thruswall, but he ran the same fortune with the rest that were before him For Sir James, having first dressed an ambuscade near unto the place, he made fourteen of his men take so many sacks, and fill them with grass, as though it had been corn, which they carried in the way to Lanark, the chief market town in that county, so hoping to draw forth the captain by that bait, and either to take him or the castle, or both Neither was this expectation frustrated, for

the captain did bite, and came forth to have taken this victual (as he supposed) But ere he could reach these carriers, Sir James, with his company, had gotten between the castle and him, and these disguised carriers, seeing the captain following after them did quickly cast off their sacks, mounted themselves on horseback, and met the captain with a sharp encounter, being so much the more amazed, as it was unlooked for, wherefore, when he saw these carriers metamorphosed into warriors, and ready to assault him, fearing that which was, that there was some tram laid for them, he turned about to have retired to his castle, but there he also met with his enemies, between which two companies he and his whole followers were slain, so that none escaped the captain afterwards being searched, they found (as it is reported) his mistress's letter about him"—*HUME's History of the House of Douglas*, fol pp 29 30'

24 Scott quotes from Lord Hailes' *Annals*

'John de St John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timely received The courage of Edward Bruce, approaching to temerity, frequently enabled him to achieve what men of more judicious valour would never have attempted He ordered the infantry and the meaner sort of his army to intrench themselves in strong narrow ground He himself, with fifty horsemen well harnessed, issued forth under cover of a thick mist, surprised the English on their march, attacked and dispersed them'

25 See on II 506, and the account of his capture given on v 171 He captured Edinburgh Castle in May, 1314, by scaling the rock on the north side

'Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself He espoused his uncle's party when Bruce first assumed the crown, and was made prisoner at the fatal battle of Methven, in which his relative's hopes appeared to be ruined Randolph accordingly not only submitted to the English, but took an active part against Bruce, appeared in arms against him, and in the skirmish where he was so closely pursued by the bloodhound, it is said his nephew took his standard with his own hand But Randolph was afterwards made prisoner by Douglas in Tweeddale, and brought before King Robert Some harsh language was exchanged between the uncle and nephew, and the latter was committed for a time to close custody Afterwards, however, they were reconciled, and Randolph was created Earl of Moray about 1312 After this period he eminently distinguished himself, first by the surprise of Edinburgh Castle, and afterwards by many similar enterprises conducted with equal courage and ability'—*SCOTT*

34 *seq* For rule, scapulare, and palmer, see Vocab

45 We must suppose that during the seven years since III 468 the hair has had time to resume its former luxuriance described in I 128

72 See Introd , p LXIII

74 *seq* St John the Baptist's day is the 24th of June (Mid summer day) Scott gives the following note 'When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling Castle continued to hold out The care of the blockade was committed by the king to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with Sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not succoured by the King of England before St John the Baptist's Day The king severely blamed his brother for the impolicy of a treaty, which gave time to the King of England to advance to the relief of the castle with all his assembled forces, and obliged himself either to meet them in battle with an inferior force or to retreat with dishonour "Let all England come," answered the reckless Edward, "we will fight them were they more' The consequence was, of course, that each kingdom mustered its strength for the expected battle, and as the space agreed upon reached from Lent to Midsummer, full time was allowed for that purpose'

81 'There is printed,' says Scott, 'in Rymer's *Foedera* the summons issued upon this occasion to the Sheriff of York, and he mentions eighteen other persons to whom similar ordinances were issued "We have understood," says the writ, "that our Scottish enemies and rebels are endeavouring to collect as strong a force as possible of infantry, in strong and marshy grounds, where the approach of cavalry would be difficult, between us and the castle of Stirling"—It then sets forth Mowbray's agreement to surrender the castle, if not relieved before St John the Baptist's Day, and the king's determination, with divine grace, to raise the siege "Therefore," the summons further bears, "to remove our said enemies and rebels from such places as above mentioned, it is necessary for us to have a strong force of infantry fit for arms" And accordingly the Sheriff of York is commanded to equip and send forth a body of four thousand infantry, to be assembled at Werk, upon the tenth day of June first, under pain of the Royal displeasure'

93 *seq* Neustria the old name (before the 10th century) of the west Frankish kingdom between the Loire and Scheldt here used to signify Edward's possessions in Northern France

Gascogne, or Gascony, in S W of France, was also a part of Edward's French possessions -

Cambria, *i e* Wales, was subdued by Edward I in 1282 3, when the Welsh king, Llewellyn, was killed in battle and his

brother executed Edward II, born at the Castle of Carnarvon about the same time, was the first 'Prince of Wales' See Gray's *Bard* Scott appends the following note 'Edward the First, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welsh, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them But this policy was not without its risks Previous to the battle of Falkirk the Welsh quarrelled with the English men at arms, and after bloodshed on both parts, separated themselves from his army, and the feud between them, at so dangerous and critical a juncture, was reconciled with difficulty Edward II followed his father's example in this particular, and with no better success They could not be brought to exert themselves in the cause of their conquerors But they had an indifferent reward for their forbearance Without arms, and clad only in scanty dresses of linen cloth, they appeared naked in the eyes even of the Scottish peasantry, and after the rout of Bannockburn, were massacred by them in great numbers, as they retired in confusion towards their own country They were under command of Sir Maurice de Berkeley'—SCOTT

99 Scott gives from Rymer's *Foedera* a list of 25 other Irish chiefs to whom mandates were issued 'There is,' he says, 'an invitation to Fth O'Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race These auxiliaries were to be commanded by Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster'

100 **Caledon** See on IV 2

118 **Marshal's Moss** just to the north of Berwick on Tweed

119 **boun'd** See Vocab

144 **plight** used as past participle See Vocab

152 See on II 460

156 **elfin** See Vocab The words *elf* and *fay* are used as terms of endearment

165 *seq* See on I 46, v 768

175 The sense seems to be 'Yet Edith made—put forward—many reasons'

182 **agen** an old form of 'again'

201 **ward** See Vocab

220 'Fitz Louis, or Mac Louis, otherwise called Fullarton, is a family of ancient descent in the Isle of Arran They are said to be of French origin, as the name intimates They attached themselves to Bruce upon his first landing, and Fergus Mac Louis, or Fullarton, received from the grateful monarch a charter,

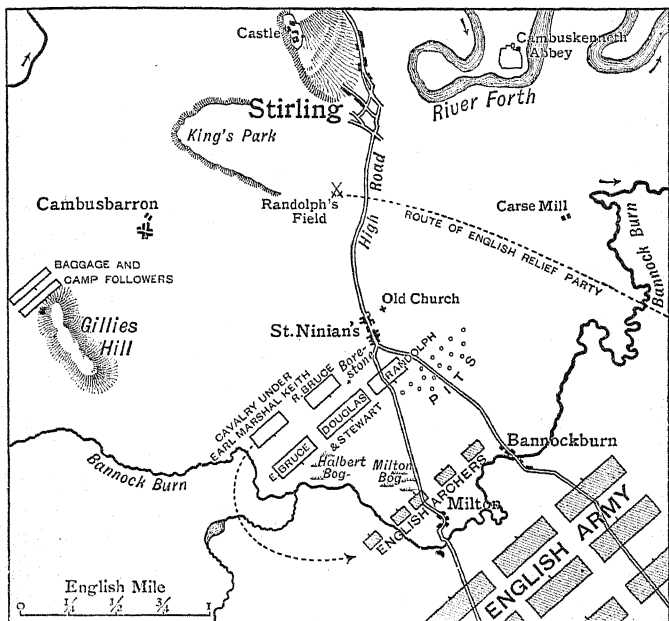
dated 26th November, in the second year of his reign (1307), for the lands of Kilmichel, and others, which still remain in this very ancient and respectable family'—SCOTT

228 For the *Gille's-hill* or better *Gillies' Hill*, see following notes

232 battles, battalions Scott gives a description of the 'arrangements adopted by King Robert' as related by Barbour and explained by Lord Humes. The account differs somewhat from that accepted by other authorities, who give Randolph the centre and Douglas and the Steward the left wing, and describe the line of the Scotch army as drawn up along the ridges which run East and West between St Ninians and the Bannockburn, and thus facing due south. It is possible that the arrangements differed on the two days. During the 23rd June the English advanced from Falkirk and bivouacked on the marshy lands on the East of the Bannockburn. It was on the evening of that day that Clifford (of course not named by Scott, as he had already killed him off at Turnberry) made his unsuccessful attempt to relieve Stirling, and De Bohun his equally unsuccessful dash at the Scotch King. On the 24th the battle, according to Barbour, opened with a forward movement of the English archers who were outflanked and cut to pieces by the Scotch cavalry under Marshal Keith. Other authorities consider that this outflanking movement was made later, and that what really decided the fortune of the day was the boggy ground and the pits dug by the Scotch (some say on the right, others on the left wing) by which the on rushing masses of the English were checked and thrown into disorder, and that while thus crowded and in confusion they were violently assailed by the Scottish archers and cavalry, and at the sight of the advancing body of camp followers they broke and fled. (See *Introd.*, p. xxv.) The following is Scott's account, which I have used in making my plan. The map itself, irrespective of the positions of the two armies, is copied from Black's *Guide*.

'Two days before the battle Bruce selected the field of action and took post there with his army, consisting of about 30,000 disciplined men, and about half the number of disorderly attendants upon the camp. The ground was called the New Park of Stirling, it was partly open, and partly broken by copses of wood and marshy ground. He divided his regular forces into four divisions. Three of these occupied a front line, separated from each other, yet sufficiently near for the purposes of communication. The fourth division formed a reserve. The line extended in a north easterly direction from the brook of Bannock, which was so rugged and broken as to cover the right flank effectually, to the village of St Ninians, probably in the line of the present road from Stirling to Kilsyth. Edward Bruce commanded the

right wing, which was strengthened by a strong body of cavalry under Keith, the Mareschal of Scotland, to whom was committed the important charge of attacking the English archers; Douglas, and the young Steward of Scotland, led the central wing; and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, the left wing. The King himself commanded the fourth division, which lay in reserve behind the others. The royal standard was pitched, according to tradition,



Walker & Cockerell sc.

in a stone, having a round hole for its reception, and thence called the Bore-stone. It is still shown on the top of a small eminence, called Brock's-brae, to the south-west of St. Ninians. His main body thus disposed, King Robert sent the followers of the camp, fifteen thousand and upwards in number, to the eminence in rear of his army, called from that circumstance the Gillies' (i.e. the servants') Hill.

‘The military advantages of this position were obvious. The Scottish left flank, protected by the brook of Bannock, could not be turned, or, if that attempt were made, a movement by the reserve might have covered it. Again, the English could not pass the Scottish army, and move towards Stirling, without exposing their flank to be attacked while in march.

‘If, on the other hand, the Scottish line had been drawn up east and west, and facing to the southward, as affirmed by Buchanan, and adopted by Mr Nimmo, the author of the *History of Stirlingshire*, there appears nothing to have prevented the English approaching upon the carse, or level ground, from Falkirk, either from turning the Scottish left flank, or from passing their position, if they preferred it, without coming to an action, and moving on to the relief of Stirling. And the Gillies’ Hill, if this less probable hypothesis be adopted, would be situated, not in the rear, as allowed by all the historians, but upon the right flank of Bruce’s army. The only objection to the hypothesis above laid down, is, that the left flank of Bruce’s army was thereby exposed to a sally from the garrison of Stirling. But, 1st, the garrison were bound to neutrality by terms of Mowbray’s treaty, and Barbour even seems to censure, as a breach of faith, some secret assistance which they rendered their countrymen upon the eve of battle, in placing temporary bridges of doors and spars over the pools of water in the carse, to enable them to advance to the charge.¹ 2dly, had this not been the case, the strength of the garrison was probably not sufficient to excite apprehension. 3dly, the adverse hypothesis leaves the rear of the Scottish army as much exposed to the Stirling garrison, as the left flank would be in the case supposed.

‘It only remains to notice the nature of the ground in front of Bruce’s line of battle. Being part of a park, or chase, it was considerably interrupted with trees, and an extensive marsh, still visible, in some places rendered it inaccessible, and in all of difficult approach. More to the northward, where the natural impediments were fewer, Bruce fortified his position against cavalry, by digging a number of pits so close together, says Barbour, as to resemble the cells in a honeycomb. They were a foot in breadth, and between two and three feet deep, many rows of them being placed one behind the other. They were slightly covered with brushwood and green sods, so as not to be obvious to an impetuous enemy.

‘All the Scottish army were on foot excepting a select body of cavalry stationed with Edward Bruce on the right wing, under the immediate command of Sir Robert Keith, the Marshal of

¹ An assistance which (by the way) could not have been rendered, had not the English approached from the south east: since, had their march been due north, the whole Scottish army must have been between them and the garrison.

Scotland, who were destined for the important service of charging and dispersing the English archers

'Thus judiciously posted, in a situation fortified both by art and nature, Bruce awaited the attack of the English'

237 **St Ninian** seems to be a corruption of St Rinnan. He is said to have been a missionary among the Picts about 400 A.D. There are many churches, etc., dedicated to him in Scotland.

240 For the numbers, see *Introd.*, p. viii

245 **Glaives**. See *Vocab.*

257 'The men of Argyle,' says Scott, 'the islanders and the Highlanders in general, were ranked in the rear. They must have been numerous, for Bruce had reconciled himself with almost all their chieftains, excepting the obnoxious Macdougals of Lorn.'

261 A picture of the 'Bore stone' (see Scott's note on l. 232), or rather of the non grating by which it is now protected from relic hunters, is given in Black's *Guide*.

263 On the tombstone of Angus Oig (Macdonald) in Iona there is a galley under sail. For Angus Oig ('Ronald') see *Index*.

266 A plume of three feathers, says Mr Mackenzie, distinguished chiefs.

278 See l. 220.

281 *seq.* **Marchers** wardens of the 'Marches', barons who had to maintain the security of the border districts. **Lodon's land** the three 'Lothians,' S. of the Firth of Forth. **Ettrick** see on v. 818. The Liddell is an affluent of the Esk, which, as also the Nith and the Annan, flows into the Solway Firth.

287 8 See on iv. 45. **Stuart** is the French way of spelling Stewart (Steward). His name was Walter Fitz Allan, and Stewart was his title as the Lord High Steward of Scotland. He afterwards married Bruce's daughter Marjorie, and their son was king Robert II (the first of the Stewart, or Stuart, dynasty).

290 **Randolph**. See on l. 25.

298 The office of 'Marischal' (Marshal see *Vocab.*) was hereditary in the Keith family (Earls of Kintore, now Keith Falconers) since the 12th century. I do not know if it is only a coincidence that *Keith* in Gaelic means 'horse'. Just 400 years after Bannockburn the 10th Earl Marischal, being implicated in the Jacobite rising of 1715, fled to the Continent, and was made Governor of Neuchâtel. Marischal College in Aberdeen was founded by the 5th Earl in 1593.

315 *seq.* For **wight**, **palfrey**, **basinet**, **truncheon**, see *Vocab.*

321 See iii. 80 *seq.*

339 **battled**, *i.e.* embattled, drawn up in 'battles' (l. 233)

340 Refers to the unhappy ending of his reign and his assassination in Berkeley Castle (1327)

341 **selle** Cf III 566 See Vocab

343 Geoffrey of Anjou, father of Henry II^d, was the first Plantagenet. It is said, though it is not certain, that the name was due to his 'wearing the common broom of Anjou (the *planta genista*) in his helmet'—GREEN

357 **nice** exact, precise. If the word is, as is said, the Lat *nescius*, through the O F *nasce*, it is strange how it developed its various meanings ignorant, silly, squeamish, punctilious, fastidious, exact—hence, delicately accurate, fine, pleasing
Tourney see Vocab

361 **Sir Henry Boune**, or Bohun, as Barbour says, was, 'to the Erle of Hurford cusyne' Humphrey (Henry?) Bohun, Earl of Hereford, High Constable of England, was taken prisoner at Bannockburn and afterwards exchanged for Bruce's queen, who had been in captivity since 1306 Cf l. 669

368 **as rocks** The plural spoils the simile. Barbour says that when the king saw him coming

'In hy (haste) till him the horse he steris (steers)'

385 'With sa gret mayne (so great force) racht him a dynt'
—BARBOUR

405 **tax** in the sense of 'penalty'. Scott, in his note, quotes the description of the combat given by Barbour, from which he has borrowed freely. But Barbour says that the king gave no answer, and merely showed the broken axe handle—which is more dramatic than Scott's version.

418 **Might speak, that**, *i.e.* might tell that

422 **fantasy** a form of 'fancy' here used for whim, caprice

428 **yonder hill** See on l. 228. It is of course, not named by Bruce, as it was first called 'Gillies' hill' after the battle.

445 *seq.* For Randolph, see on VI 25. In his note Scott gives the following account. In spite of his arguments, it is not seldom stated that the Scotch army faced south, with St Ninians and 'Randolph's Field' directly to the rear.

'While the van of the English army advanced, a detached body attempted to relieve Stirling. Lord Hailes gives the following account of this manœuvre and the result, which is accompanied by circumstances highly characteristic of the chivalrous manners of the age, and displays that generosity which reconciles us even to their ferocity upon other occasions.

'Bruce had enjoined Randolph, who commanded the left wing of his army, to be vigilant in preventing any advanced

parties of the English from throwing succours into the castle of Stirling

“Eight hundred horsemen, commanded by Sir Robert Clifford, were detached from the English army, they made a circuit by the low grounds to the east, and approached the castle. The king perceived their motions, and coming up to Randolph, angrily exclaimed, ‘Thoughtless man! you have suffered the enemy to pass.’ Randolph hastened to repair his fault, or perish. As he advanced the English cavalry wheeled to attack him. Randolph drew up his troops in a circular form, with their spears resting on the ground, and protended on every side. At the first onset, Sir William Daynecourt, an English commander of distinguished note, was slain. The enemy, far superior in numbers to Randolph, environed him, and pressed hard on his little band. Douglas saw his jeopardy, and requested the king’s permission to go and succour him. ‘You shall not move from your ground,’ cried the king, ‘let Randolph extricate himself as he best may. I will not alter my order of battle, and lose the advantage of my position.’—‘In truth,’ replied Douglas, ‘I cannot stand by and see Randolph perish, and, therefore, with your leave, I must aid him.’ The king unwillingly consented, and Douglas flew to the assistance of his friend. While approaching, he perceived that the English were falling into disorder, and that the perseverance of Randolph had prevailed over their impetuous courage. ‘Halt,’ cried Douglas, ‘those brave men have repulsed the enemy: let us not diminish their glory by sharing it.’”—DALRYMPLE’S *Annals of Scotland*

‘Two large stones erected at the north end of the village of Newhouse, about a quarter of a mile from the south part of Stirling, ascertain the place of this memorable skirmish. The circumstance tends, were confirmation necessary, to support the opinion of Lord Hailes, that the Scottish line had Stirling on its left flank. It will be remembered, that Randolph commanded infantry, Daynecourt cavalry. Supposing, therefore, according to the vulgar hypothesis, that the Scottish line was drawn up, facing to the south, in the line of the brook of Bannock, and consequently that Randolph was stationed with his left flank resting upon Milntown bog, it is morally impossible that his infantry, moving from that position, with whatever celerity, could cut off from Stirling a body of cavalry who had already passed St. Ninian’s, or, in other words, were already between them and the town. Whereas, supposing Randolph’s left to have approached St. Ninian’s, the short movement to Newhouse could easily be executed, so as to intercept the English in the manner described.’

478 His followers Clifford was really in command. See on 1 232 Some give the number of Clifford’s relief party at only 300

484 **Demayet** (l 509, Demayet dun), properly Dun myat, is a prominent hill (1375 ft) in the Ochils to the N E of Stirling, beyond the river Forth

486 'At Alloa commence the windings called the Links of Forth These windings form a great number of peninsulas of a very fertile soil'—BLACK'S *Guide* See Vocab

493 See Introd, p xxi 'Multitudes of the English,' says Fraser Tytler, 'were drowned when attempting to cross the river Forth'

497 *seq wassail* See Vocab 'They (the English) passed the night in great riot and revelry At the first break of day the Scottish army heard mass This solemn ceremony was performed by Maurice, the Abbot of Inchaffray'—FRASER TYTLER M^r Mackenzie, however, informs us that 'it is mainly from English sources that we learn how the English passed the fore part of the night of Sunday, the 23rd' See Introd, p xxiv n

508 See on l 484

511 The **bittern** is a kind of heron It makes a deep booming noise Hence its other name, 'mire drum' Cf *Lady of Lake*, I xxxi, where we have the lark's 'shrill fife' and the 'bittern's drum'

515 'There is an old tradition, that the well-known Scottish tune of "Hey, tutti taitti," was Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn The late Mr Ritson, no granter of propositions, doubts whether the Scots had any martial music, and quotes Froissart's account of each soldier in the host bearing a little horn, on which, at the onset, they would make such a horrible noise, as if all the devils of hell had been among them He observes, that these horns are the only music mentioned by Barbour, and concludes, that it must remain a moot point whether Bruce's army were cheered even by the sound of a solitary bagpipe It may be observed in passing that the Scottish of this period certainly observed some musical cadence, even in winding their horns, since Bruce was at once recognized by his followers from his mode of blowing (IV xviii) But the tradition, true or false, has been the means of securing to Scotland one of the finest lyrics in the language, the celebrated war song of Burns, *Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled*'—SCOTT

522 **battalia** looks like a plural formed from 'battalion,' regarded as a neuter Greek substantive *Battaglia*, 'battle,' in Italian is feminine, and *battaglione* (Fr *bataillon*), 'battalion,' is the masculine augmentative For 'battles,' cf l 232

524 For the relative numbers of the two armies, see Introd p xxiii 'Upon the 24th of June,' says Scott, 'the English army advanced to the attack The narrowness of the Scottish front,

and the nature of the ground, did not permit them to have the full advantage of their numbers, nor is it very easy to find out what was their proposed order of battle. The vanguard, however, appeared a distinct body consisting of archers and spear men on foot, and commanded, as already said, by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford. Barbour, in one place, mentions that they formed nine *BATTLES*, or divisions, but it appears that there was no room or space for them to extend themselves, so that, except the vanguard, the whole army appeared to form one solid and compact body. Scott here quotes Barbour, who says of the English 'For all their battles (battalions) sumyn (together) were in a schiltrum (a compact mass)'. *Schiltrum* is the word used for the circles or squares in which Wallace drew up his troops at Falkirk.

540 See on vi 42. He had succeeded John of Bretagne as Governor of Scotland.

552 bare foot as a generic epithet is good enough, but here it seems out of place, for Edward is asked to see what he certainly could not see. Scott quotes the following from Lord Hailes' *Annals*: 'Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army. He then passed along the front, bare footed, and bearing a crucifix in his hands, and exhorting the Scots in a few and forcible words, to combat for their rights and their liberty. The Scots kneeled down. "They yield," cried Edward, "see, they implore mercy." "They do," answered Ingelram de Umfraville, "but not ours. On that field they will be victorious, or die."'

558 Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, was nephew to Edward II. For his death see on l 797.

589 See on v 402.

593 Marshal. See on l 298. 'The English archers,' says Scott, 'commenced the attack with their usual bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided. A small but select body of cavalry were detached from the right, under command of Sir Robert Keith. They rounded, as I conceive, the marsh called Milntown bog, and, keeping the firm ground, charged the left flank and rear of the English archers. As the bowmen had no spears nor long weapons, fit to defend themselves against horse, they were instantly thrown into disorder, and spread through the whole English army a confusion, from which they never fairly recovered.'

'Although the success of this manœuvre was evident, it is very remarkable that the Scottish generals do not appear to have profited by the lesson. Almost every subsequent battle which they lost against England was decided by the archers, to whom

the close and compact array of the Scottish phalanx afforded an exposed and unresisting mark. The bloody battle of Halidon Hill, fought scarce twenty years afterwards, was so completely gained by the archers that the English are said to have lost only one knight, one esquire, and a few foot soldiers. At the battle of Neville's Cross, in 1346, where David II. was defeated and made prisoner, John de Graham, observing the loss which the Scots sustained from the English bowmen, offered to charge and disperse them, if a hundred men at arms were put under his command. "*But, to confess the truth,*" says Fordun, "he could not procure a single horseman for the service proposed." Of such little use is experience in war, where its results are opposed by habit or prejudice.

598 to let to hinder

603 barbed See Vocab

612 Sherwood forest in former times covered large parts of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and extended nearly as far north as Wakefield. It is well known as the hunting ground of Robin Hood. By Dallom Lee Scott may mean Dalham in Suffolk.

619 wont See on III 134

625 *seq* wight, baldric See Vocab

627 Roger Ascham (says Scott) quotes a Scottish proverb 'Every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty four Scottes.' 'It is said,' Scott adds, 'I trust incorrectly, by an ancient English historian, that the "good Lord James of Douglas" dreaded the superiority of the English archers so much, that when he made any of them prisoner, he gave him the option of losing the forefinger of his right hand or his right eye, either species of mutilation rendering him incapable to use the bow. I have mislaid the reference to this singular passage.'

633 rightward, *ie* from the English position. This is evidently Scott's meaning. Others describe the 'pottit' ground as on the Scottish right. See on I 232

646 'It is generally alleged by historians that the English men at arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them. Barbour does not mention the circumstance. According to his account, Randolph, seeing the slaughter made by the cavalry (under Marshal Keith) on the right wing among the (English) archers, advanced courageously against the main body of the English, and entered into close combat with them. Douglas and Stuart, who commanded the Scottish centre, led their division also to the charge, and the battle, becoming general along the whole line, was obstinately maintained on both sides for a long space of time, the Scottish archers doing great

execution among the English men it aims, after the bowmen of England were dispersed.—SCOTT

652 **acton** a quilted coat (padded often with cotton) worn under armour It is the Arabic *al q'oton*, 'the cotton' Chaucer spells it *alcoun* Cf Scott's *Lay*, III 61

656 **steeds that shriek** 'I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note, and, indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage, may be permitted to doubt, that, in moments of sudden or intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream, which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard'—SCOTT

660 Lockhart cites the same simile from the *Lady of the Lake*, VI 18

669 *seq* Thomas Plantagenet, second son of Edward I, was called after his birthplace, Brotherton in Yorkshire

Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, died in 1331

Gloster See on l 558

Sir Maurice de Berkeley See on l 93, and Introd, p xxv n, footnote He was taken prisoner with his father Thomas Baron de Berkeley

Grey, possibly Sir Thomas de Gray, but he had already been taken prisoner at Randolph's Field, more likely a Grey of Northumberland

Hereford See on l 361

John Baron de Bottetourt was the admiral of the English fleet His two sons were taken prisoner (see lists in note to l 896)

Sanzavere unknown to me

William de Ros, Baron of Hamlake, Yorkshire, was at this time Warden of the West Marches of Scotland

Montagu (or Montacute) ancestor of the Duke of Manchester

Sir Edmond Mauley, Marshal (or Seneschal) of England, was slain or drowned (see list)

Sir Philip de Courtenay was slain (see list)

Henry de Percy was governor of Galloway (see v 779) and founder of the family of Percy of Alnwick

677 It was at Dunbar that Balliol's forces were routed in 1296 For Falkirk and Methven, see Introduction II and Index

679 The battle of Cressy was fought in 1346, and that of Poitiers in 1356 Between Dunbar and Poitiers there were 60 years Red seems to mean 'bloody'

680 Pembroke See l 540

691 See on VI 287, where Scott spells it *Stuart*

717 Lockhart, in his edition of the poem, quotes Cowper's lines, perhaps imitated here by Scott,

‘All these, their rambling journey done,
Have found their home, the grave’

But the difference between ‘home’ and ‘inn’ in this connexion is one to give us pause

718 ‘Such a line as this,’ exclaimed the *Monthly Reviewer*, ‘must wound every ear that has the least pretension to judge of poetry’

726 *seq* Egremont Castle is in Cumberland Walter de Beauchamp will be found in the list of prisoners (l 896) Beauchamp Court was in Warwickshire For Montague, etc, see on l 669

740 Ailsa Craig—something like the Bass Rock off the East Coast—is about 12 miles from the coast of Ayrshire It is 1100 feet high and about 2 miles in circumference ‘At the height of about 250 feet are the remains of an old castle or watch tower Myriads of sea fowl build their nests on the cliffs The island is the property of the Marquis of Ailsa, who takes from it his title as a British peer’—BLACK Scott’s note is as follows ‘When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time Bruce made a decisive movement, by bringing up the Scottish reserve It is traditionally said, that at this crisis, he addressed the Lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, “My trust is constant in thee” Barbour intimates, that the reserve “assembled on one field,” that is, on the same line with the Scottish forces already engaged, which leads Lord Hailes to conjecture that the Scottish ranks must have been much thinned by slaughter, since, in that circumscribed ground, there was room for the reserve to fall into line But the advance of the Scottish cavalry must have contributed a good deal to form the vacancy occupied by the reserve’

749 *Innisgail*, ‘Islands of the Gaels,’ i.e. the Western Isles (Mr Mackenzie, however, says ‘islands of the strangers, so called from their occupation by the Norsemen’ Cf Fingal, ‘fair haired stranger’) *Innis*, island, is related to *Inch* Cf Enniskillen, Inchkeith, etc

758 See on II 37 As crusader (Knight of Rhodes) he had the red cross on his shield

800 See Introd, p xxv ‘The followers of the Scottish camp,’ says Scott, ‘observed, from the Gillies’ Hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and, prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary

manner, such arms as they found nearest, fastened sheets to tent poles and lances, and showed themselves like a new army advancing to battle

‘The unexpected apparition of what seemed a new army, completed the confusion which already prevailed among the English, who fled in every direction, and were pursued with immense slaughter. The brook of Bannock, according to Barbour, was so choked with the bodies of men and horses that it might have been passed dry shod. The followers of the Scottish camp fell upon the disheartened fugitives, and added to the confusion and slaughter. Many were driven into the Forth, and perished there, which, by the way, could hardly have happened had the armies been drawn up east and west, since, in that case, to get at the river, the English fugitives must have fled through the victorious army. About a short mile from the field of battle is a place called the Bloody Folds. Here the Earl of Gloucester is said to have made a stand, and died gallantly at the head of his own military tenants and vassals. He was much regretted by both sides, and it is said the Scottish would gladly have saved his life, but, neglecting to wear his surcoat with armorial bearings over his armour, he fell unknown, after his horse had been stabbed with spears.

‘Sir Marmaduke Twenge, an English knight, contrived to conceal himself during the fury of the pursuit, and when it was somewhat slackened, approached King Robert. “Whose prisoner are you, Sir Marmaduke?” said Bruce, to whom he was personally known. “Yours, sir,” answered the knight. “I receive you,” answered the king, and treating him with the utmost courtesy, loaded him with gifts, and dismissed him without ransom. The other prisoners were all well treated. There might be policy in this, as Bruce would naturally wish to acquire the good opinion of the English barons, who were at this time at great variance with their king. But it also well accords with his high chivalrous character.’

808 ‘Edward II, according to the best authorities, shewed, in the fatal field of Bannockburn, personal gallantry not unworthy of his great sire and greater son. He remained on the field till forced away by the Earl of Pembroke, when all was lost. He then rode to the Castle of Stirling, and demanded admittance, but the governor remonstrating upon the imprudence of shutting himself up in that fortress, which must so soon surrender, he assembled around his person five hundred men at arms, and, avoiding the field of battle and the victorious army, fled towards Linlithgow, pursued by Douglas with about sixty horse. They were augmented by Sir Lawrence Abernethy with twenty more, whom Douglas met in the Torwood upon their way to join the English army, and whom he easily persuaded to

desert the defeated monarch, and to assist in the pursuit. They hung upon Edward's flight as far as Dunbar, too few in number to assail him with effect, but enough to harass his retreat so constantly, that whoever fell an instant behind was instantly slain, or made prisoner. Edward's ignominious flight terminated at Dunbar, where the Earl of March, who still professed allegiance to him, "received him full gently." From thence the monarch of so great an empire, and the late commander of so gallant and numerous an army, escaped to Bamborough in a fishing vessel.—SCOTT

819 See VI 321 and III 80 For *gage*, see Vocab

824 The banner of Douglas had at this time, says Mr Mackenzie, three white stars on azure. At a later date it bore a bleeding heart. See on II 566

842 Cf II 299

850 *crush* See Vocab

878 Cf III 82 He still refuses Bruce the kingly title

879 Edward does not seem to have restrained Argentine (VI xiv) from attacking Bruce, so 'my Sovereign's charge' means 'the duty of escorting my sovereign' (VI 816)

893 *late wake* See Vocab

896 'The remarkable circumstances,' says Scott, 'attending the death of De Argentine have been already noticed. Besides this renowned warrior, there fell many representatives of the noblest houses in England, which never sustained a more bloody and disastrous defeat. Barbour says that two hundred pairs of gilded spurs were taken from the field of battle, and that some were left the author can bear witness, who has in his possession a curious antique spur, dug up in the morass, not long since.'

Scott also cites from an old record a list of the Knights and Knights Bannerets slain or made prisoner. Among their names the following are mentioned in the poem.

Slain—Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester (VI 800), Robert de Clifford (VI 478), William Dayncourt (VI 445), Aegidius de Argenteyne (II 37, etc.), Edmund Maulley (VI 674), Henry de Boun (VI 361), Philip de Courtenay (VI 675)

Prisoners—Henry de Boun, Earl of Hereford (VI 362, 672), Maurice de Berekley (VI 672), Ingelram de Umfraville (VI 552 note), Marmaduke de Twenge (VI 800 note), Thomas de Gray (VI 672?), Walter de Beauchamp (VI 727), John de Ewere (VI 672?), Radulph and Thomas Bottetort (VI 673)

'In sum there were slain,' cites Scott, 'along with the Earl of Gloucester, forty two barons and bannerets. The number of earls, barons, and bannerets made captive, was twenty two, and sixty eight knights. Many clerks and esquires were also there slain or taken. Roger de Northburgh, keeper of the king's

signet (*Custos Targae Domini Regis*), was made prisoner with his two clerks, Roger de Wakenfelde and Thomas de Switon, upon which the king caused a seal to be made, and entitled it his *privy seal*, to distinguish the same from the signet so lost. The Earl of Hereford was exchanged against Bruce's queen, who had been detained in captivity ever since the year 1306. The *Targae*, or signet, was restored to England through the intercession of Ralph de Monthermer, ancestor of Lord Monia, who is said to have found favour in the eyes of the Scottish King.

'Such,' adds Scott, 'were the immediate consequences of the field of Bannockburn. Its more remote effects, in completely establishing the national independence of Scotland, afford a boundless field for speculation.'

902 **Banneret** a title now extinct, given to a knight for distinguished service on the field. He then, says Mr Mackenzie, exchanged his double pointed pennon for a square banner. He had the privilege of leading his retainers to battle under his own banner. The last banneret was created for saving the royal standard at Edgehill, in 1642.

905 *seq.* For **Leopards**, see on II 489. For the effect produced on the 'ferocious patriotism' of certain critics by Scott's sentiments see on IV 93. Jeffrey says it is difficult to see for what purpose Scott assumes this 'extreme courtesy' except to 'appease critics and attract readers in the southern part of the island.' In his opinion 'the author has lessened the interest of the mighty fight of Bannockburn to that which might be supposed to belong to a well regulated tournament among friendly rivals.'

925 The difficulty about these dark locks (see on VI 45) began all over again when Edith reassumed the character of the 'elfin page.' The 'bonnet' is meant to explain matters, but does not do so very satisfactorily.

947 **Cambuskenneth Abbey** (see plan) was founded by 'Saint' David I., in 1147 for canons regular of the order of St Augustine. At the Reformation its possessions were bestowed on the Earl of Mar, but about 1737 they were purchased by Stirling Town Council for the benefit of Cowane's Hospital.] place of James III. and his queen.

956 'Bruce issues orders,' says the *Quarterly Review* (1815), 'for the celebration of the nuptials, whether they were ever solemnized it is impossible to say. As critics we should certainly have forbidden the banns, because, although it is conceivable that the mere lapse of time might not have eradicated the passion of Edith, yet how such a circumstance alone, without even the assistance of an interview, could have created one in the bosom of Ronald, is altogether inconceivable. He must have proposed to marry merely from compassion, or for the sake of her lands,

and, upon either supposition, it would have comported with the delicacy of Edith to refuse his proffered hand ' When sending the MS of the poem (up to this line) to Mr James Ballantyne (see Introd p xii), Scott wrote ' You have now the whole affair, excepting two or three concluding stanzas As your taste for brides' cake may induce you to desire to know more of the wedding, I will save you some criticism by saying that I have settled to stop short as above Witness my hand, W S '

CONCLUSION

6 When Scott settled at Ashestiel he made acquaintance with the ' lovely young Countess of Dalkeith, afterwards Harriet, Duchess of Buccleugh, ' who had come (as he tells us) to the land of her husband with the desire of making herself acquainted with its traditions and customs, as well as its manners and history (The Duke of Buccleugh was the head of the Clan Scott, to which the poet himself belonged) At her suggestion Scott wrote (1805) his *Lay of the Last Minstrel* See Introd p xi , and for the death of the Duchess of Buccleugh, see Introd p xxvii

17 **one poor garland** the *Lord of the Isles*, which he had intended to dedicate to her

VOCABULARY

A S = Anglo Saxon, M E = Middle English, O F = Old French, O G = Old German, Gael = Gaelic, etc

abye (v 656) A S *abugan* Common in M E as *abiggen* or *abyen*, past tense *aboughte*, meaning to buy off, hence pay for In *Mids N Dr* III 2 175 the reading of the Quarto is 'aby'

Albyn (I 38), *Alba inn*, *Albany* probably the Celtic *alp inn*, 'hill island' The name seems to have been originally applied to the whole of Britain, but afterwards specially to Scotland The classical **Albion** is probably from the same root, though formerly explained as the 'white island'

amice (II 426) a grey robe for pilgrims (see Milton, *P R* IV 427) Also the white upper part of the robe of a 'massing priest' Through Fr *amu*, from Lat *amictus*, robe, lit 'what is cast about one'

armada (I 374, v 310) fem of *armado*, armed (Spanish), an armed fleet, a war fleet From Lat *armare*, to arm

baldrick (VI 627), Lat *balteus*, O G *balderick*, Eng *belt*, spelt *bardrick* by Chaucer Originally the military belt, worn transversely over one shoulder Later also a jewelled ornament worn round the neck by ladies and noblemen

ban (II 443) curse, excommunication Cf II 534 Cognate with O G *ban*, or *pan*, a summons Plural *banns*, in old writers *banes*

barbed (VI 603) accoutred with armour (said of a horse) 'Barbed steeds,' *Rub III* 1 1 10 Also spelt *barded* (Fr *bardé*, from *bardé* horse armour) Both forms are correct as the word means 'furnished with a beard' (Fr *barbe* Ger *Bar*, Icelandic *bard*, used for brim of a helmet, armed beak of a ship, barb of an arrow, etc, whence, according to Skeat, the word easily applied to horses with spiked plates on their foreheads)

- bard** (I 36) perhaps originally 'a speaker' Celtic word found, in Welsh, Irish, and Gaelic
- basinet** (VI 319), *basenet*, or *basnet* a small round helmet, formed like a basin Spenser, *F Q* VI 1 31
- bay** (IV 455) The original expression is 'to abay' (hence 'to a bay' found in older writers) which is the French *au aboi*, where *aboi* means the bark of a dog (cf *Fi aboye*, from Lat *ad bauare*, to yelp at)
- beadsman** (IV 761), 'a man employed to pray for another, and privileged to receive certain alms' The old sense of *bead* is 'prayer' (cf Ger *beten*) and a bead was so called because used for counting prayers (Skeat)
- beaker** (II 10) low Lat *baccinum*, Ger *Becher* originally from Grk *βίλος*, an Oriental word for a wine jar
- beltane** (I 207) is the O Irish *belteime*, a name for May, or the 1st of May The word *teime* means fire, and *bel* perhaps means 'bright,' and just possibly may be the old Phœnician *Bel* (or Baal) the name of the sun god, to whom (as to Moloch) human victims were burnt On the 1st of May and on St John's day (at the summer solstice) the old heathen Irish lighted fires and drove cattle through them The custom may be Celtic (Druidic) or may be of Phœnician origin It existed also in Germany, at the summer solstice (*Sonnenwende*) and on Mayday (*Walpurgstag*) An Irish correspondent tells me that *bel* perhaps is the Irish *bal*, a large tree (or sacred tree), so that *belteime* would be a fire made from a sacred tree
- ben** Gael *beann*, a peak
- blazon** (III 441), **blazonry** (V 777) heraldic arms M E *blason*, shield, coat of arms Skeat connects it, and the *blason* of *Hamlet* I 5 21, with Ger *blasen*, to blow, trumpet forth, blaze abroad
- boltsprit** a false spelling of 'bowsprit' *Sprit*, a spar, is probably Danish *spræt*, but cognate with A S *spreot*, a sprout Cf *boem*, akin to Eng *beam*, but taken directly from Danish *boom*, a tree
- bondsman** (I 204) Of the usual derivation of *bondage*, etc, from *bind* Skeat says 'It is certain that this is false, the A S *bonda* (bondman, boor, householder) being from Icelandic *bóndi*, a short form of *buandi*, a tiller of the soil' (Cf Ger *Bauer*, Dutch *boer*)
- bonnet** (I 369, etc) perhaps from Hindustani *bandt*, woollen cloth It is used for the Highland head dress, Scotch cap
- boor** (I 212) see under *bondsman*

- bosk** (v 423 Cf v 535) Our 'bush,' says Skeat is due to French pronunciation of the M E *bush*. The word in various forms is common to Scand and Teut languages. The Ital *bosco* and Fr *bois* are from the Teutonic, through the low Lat *boscus*.
- boun'd** (I 586, VI 119) used by Scott as a past participle, 'prepared,' as from a verb 'to boun'. The word *bound*, 'ready (especially of a ship), is properly the M E *boun*, the *d* being parasitic, as in *sound* (Lat *sonus*). In *Rokeby*, VI xxiv Scott uses *bounc* as past participle.
- bourne** (v 535) means either a boundary, limit, from O F *bonne* (*Lear*, IV 6 57), or a stream, burn, Ger *Brunnen* (*Lear*, III 6 67). Which sense it has in *Hamlet*, III 1 79 is doubtful, as also in the present passage.
- bower** (II 109 etc), in the sense 'chamber', A S *bur*, M E *houre*, in Ger, Swed, Dan, =coop, cage. Cf Lowland Scotch *byre*, a cow house.
- brand** (II 222, III 415, etc) M E *brond*, Ger *Brand*, a piece of burning wood, fire brand (III 646), hence a flashing sword blade.
- brogues** (III 405) Gael *bròg*, a shoe stout coarse shoes, 'anciently of the hide of a deer, cow, or horse, with the hair on' (Martin).
- brook** (I 522 IV 480, 702) to endure, put up with. The M E *brooke* means rather to enjoy, use. Cognate, it is said, with Lat *frui*, *fructus*. Cf Ger *brauchen*, to use or need.
- brunt** (v 415, 527, VI 109) rush, shock (of battle). Skeat takes it to be connected with *burn*, and to mean fiery speed. Ideas of heat and speed are combined in many languages.
- bugle horn** (I 227) the correct expression (used by Chaucer) for what we generally call a 'bugle', for a *bugle* is properly a wild ox, Lat *buculus*. 'In the Isle of Wight,' says Mr Bayne, 'the bull's head may be seen on inn signs accompanied by the word *bugle*'.
- burnish** (I 295), to make bright, polish connected with 'burn' and also 'brown' (cf *swart*).
- carliff** (III 414) O F *carlif*, Fr *chétif*, Ital *cattivo*, originally meant 'captive' (Lat *captivus*), and thus used by Chaucer 'Carlif to cruel Kyng Agamemnon'.
- canon** (II 525), Grk *κανών*, a straight rod—hence (1) a rule, (2) a gun barrel, cannon.
- canopy** (II 100), a curtain hung over a throne or dais. From Grk *αλωνωπέιον*, a mosquito curtain. In Fr and Ger still more changed, viz *canapé*.

- casque** (I 587) probably the Spanish *casco*, shield, skull, helmet
Cash is another form of the same Cf *basinet*
- chalice** (v 251) Grk *καλυξ*, Lat *calix*, a cup, especially that used at the Lord's supper
- charnel** (III 718), containing dead bodies another form of *carnal*, Lat *carialis*, fleshly
- cheer** (1) expression of face (III 22, etc.), and (2) good fare (III 426, etc.) Said to come from Grk *καπα* (head) through low Lat *cava*, O F *chere* The sense 'good fare' seems to come from that of a cheer ful countenance
- coil** (I 45, v 9, etc.), bustle, turmoil 'Like many half slang words it is Celtic' (Skeat) Gael *goul*, boiling, fume, fury Frequent in Shaks in this sense Evidently nothing in the world to do with a 'coil' of rope (Fr *cueilli*, Lat *colligere*) In the celebrated 'when we have shuffled off this mortal coil' (from which Scott borrows his expression) does it mean 'the turmoil of mortal life,' or something quite different?
- coronach** (IV 132) 'The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ululatus* of the Romans, and the *Ululoo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation poured forth by mourners When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased' (Scott)
- cope** (II 564), another form of 'cape,' from low Lat *cappa*, of unknown origin
- cope** (III 385), to oppose successfully, from Fr *couper*, strike (Grk *κολαφος*)
- couch a lance** (II 505, VI 366) Fr *coucher*, Lat *collocare*, to place, set, arrange
- craven** (III 528) M E *cravand*, means 'craving,' i.e. one who craves for quarter, hence a defeated man, or coward
- cresset** (I 509) the derivation from *croissette*, a little cross, is given up in favour of O F *creuset*, a small pot (Cf *cuët*, crucible, cuise, Ger *Krug*) 'A cresset consisted of an open pot or cup at the end of a pole' (Skeat)
- crone** (III 492) probably from Gael *crion*, withered
- cuish** (VI 850, 869) = *cuisses*, armour for the thigh See Shaks I *Hen IV*, IV 1 105 Fr *cuisse*, a thigh, from Lat *coxa*
- cushat** (I 7), A S *cusceote* ring dove, wood pigeon
- dais** (II 99) The Lat *discus* (Grk *δίσκος*), a quoit (i.e. a flat circular slab) came to mean also a platter (dish) and a table (desk), and finally (dais) the raised platform, or the canopy, of a 'high table' in a hall, M E *deys* (Chaucer, *C T*, 370)
- dan** (III 613) = Lat *dominus*, a title of respect given especially to monks, but also to other persons, as *dawn Arcite* (Chaucer)

- diapason** (I 51) used by Scott for 'harmony,' as in Milton's 'in perfect diapason (*It a solemn Music*)'. It means the concord of the first and last notes of an octave (*δια πασῶν τῶν χορδῶν*), which is more properly perhaps regarded as a perfect harmony than as unison.
- donjon** (I 775) the O F form of *dungeon*, the keep tower or chief tower of a castle, from low Lat *dominion*[em], domain, possession (cf 'strength' = castle), hence = 'prison'.
- enhance** (I 147), possibly a corrupt form of O F *enhancer*, to heighten (in and *haut*), but there is a Prov word *enansar*, to advance (*enant* = before, cf Ital *innanzi*).
- enchase** (V 21), lit to frame, 'encase' (Fr *enchâsser*), hence to enclose in a setting, to beautify, emboss, etc.
- elf, elvish** (I 455) A S *oelf* (cf 'oaf'), Ger *Elf* and *Elfe*. Possibly the same as the Ger *Ein Alp* in the sense of hobgoblin, nightmare—and this is probably a 'mass,' 'incubus'. *Eine Alp* means however nowadays rather a mountain pasture than a mountain.
- falchion** (III 156, etc.), a sickle shaped sword, from Lat *falx*, sickle, through low Lat *falcio*[nem], Ital *falcione*. Called in Lat *ensis falcatus*, and in Grk *απρη*.
- fallow** (III 427) pale yellow, yellow red. Connected with Lat *pallidus*, Ger *falb*, *fahl*, Dutch *vaal* (the Vaal River, whence the Transvaal gets its name, is the 'yellow river,' like the Xanthus). Skeat says 'the meaning *untilled* is a mere English development, and refers to the reddish colour of ploughed land'. We must take 'untilled' here to mean 'ploughed but not used for crops'.
- fell** (I 9, etc.), a hill, originally probably an open down, sheep pasture, and the same word as 'field' (Thus *eine Alp* in Ger means a mountain pasture rather than a mountain).
- fell** (I 569), cruel, fierce, perhaps from low Lat *fello*[nem], traitor, felon, which is probably of Celtic origin. Cognate with Lat *fallere*.
- gage** (verb or noun II 115, 495, VI 819), pledge, from the Lat root *vail*. Cognate with A S *wed*, a pledge. Cf *wage*, *wager*.
- galla glass** (I 211), or *gallow glass* (*Macb* I 2 13) is the Irish *galloglach*, a heavy armed foot soldier, some say, a foreign soldier, or a soldier armed in the foreign (English) fashion. From Irish *galla*, a servant, boy, lacquey, 'gillie'.
- galley** (III 436) low Lat *galea*, O F *gale*. Of uncertain origin. Evidently not Lat *galea*, a helmet. Some propose *galé*, a gallery, others the Grk *galeos*, a kind of shark.
- gaud** (I 229, IV 554) lit a 'delight,' Lat *gaudium*, hence ornament.

girth see on II 401

glaive (VI 245), sword from Lat *gladius* (O F *glaive*) Cognate is *claymore*, Gael *claidheamh mor* (great sword)

glee (III 486), joy, mirth, joyous music exists in Icelandic, and is of unknown origin In A S the forms *gleo*, and also *glig*, occur

grisly (III 338, v 633), a form of *grisly*, cognate with Ger *grauslich*, *graulich*, etc Possibly from a root meaning to shudder In Ger the ideas of 'grey' and 'gruesome', 'grizzly' and 'grisly' (*graulich* and *grauslich*) have got a little mixed, but the words seem originally quite distinct

guerdon (I 63) generally derived from *under donum*, a queer compound of old Ger and Lat, meaning a 'return gift' Some, however, connect it with Ger *Wert* (worth, value) It is common in Spenser and other English poets 'But the fair guerdon when we hope to find' (Milton)

halidome (III 272), holiness, i.e. honour Evidently A S *halig dom*, Ger *Heiligtum* But in his edition of *Piers* Mr Skeat takes it to be the Icelandic *helgu dómar*, sacred relics

harness (v 167) 'In old books it almost always means body armour for a soldier' (Skeat) O F *harnas*, from old Breton *harnaz*, iron The word *iron* seems related to it The modern Ger *Harnisch* is through the French

hauberk (I 340, v 184) O F *hauberc*, from O G *halsberc*, lit 'neck protector' Later used of the whole coat of mail

haught (I 627), old form of *haughty* Fr *haut*, O F *halt*, Lat *altus*

hearse (II 539, VI 974), lit a harrow, Fr *herse*, used for the triangular framework on which lights were placed at funerals, then applied to the stand on which the coffin was placed, and also to the coffin itself, the pall, and the funeral car

hest (III 122) or *behest*, a command, A S *haes*, from *hátan*, to bid (Ger *heissen*)

holt (IV 424), a copse, or woody hill An A S word cognate with Ger *Holz* See Chaucer, *Prol* 5

ken (III 431) 'Not English, but Scandinavian' (Skeat) In M E (Chaucer) it means to recognise, discern, but also to teach Cognate with Ger *kennen*, and connected with *can*, *con*, *konnen*

lair, used in IV 84 in the old sense of a couch or bed, in v 88 in the ordinary later sense A S *leger*, M E *leir* and *layere* (meaning a camp) Cf Ger *Lager*, used in all these meanings

late wake (v 893), in evident and natural, corruption of the old word *lathwake* (used by Chaucer), the 'body watch' (cf *Lachen wache*), i.e. the watch (wake) kept over a dead body Cf *Lachfeld*, and *lath gate*, (the porch of a churchyard)

lattice (v 51) a cross banded structure made of *laths* Fr *lattis* from *latte*, a lath Cf *Latte*

lea, A S *leah*, untilled land, pasture, possibly connected with light Cf *Ger Lichtung*, a clearing

lee (I 496), a sheltered place, the side of the ship sheltered from the wind 'The word is Scandinavian The true English is *lee*, still used provincially' (Skeat) This probably accounts for *leeward* being pronounced *lee ward* (I 529)

hege frequent in the poem is substantive or adjective Said to be from the O G (also modern) *ledig*, free, whence O F *lige*, M E *lige* The true sense is therefore *free* (it is used thus by Babbalanja in his *Bruce*), and a *hege lord* is a lord who recognises no over lord According to Skeat the false derivation from Lat *ligatus* has given it the exactly contrary sense of 'bound,' e.g. 'hege vassals' in the sense of 'bound to a lord'

links See v 486, where Scott evidently means 'links' in the ordinary sense (connected with *Ger Gelenk*, a joint, from *lenken*, to bend), but with reference also to the Scotch word 'links,' derived probably from A S *hlinc*, though this is said to mean a ridge or undulating (not flat) ground

loop hole (I 592), probably from Dutch *lurp*, a peep hole *Loop*, a noose, is *Giel*

lore (IV 296) A S *lar*, learning, what is 'learnt' or found out

lour (I 421) or *louer*, used as substantive 'gloom' Cf Dutch *loeren*, to frown, *Ger lauern*, to lurk, sulk Perhaps connected with A S *hleora*, the face, visage

lurcher (v 556), a weak form of *lurker* To *lurk* in Shaks means to *lurk* and also to *steal* The lurcher dog is named from its stealthy habits

mail (v 265) 'a steel network forming body armour' O F *maille*, from Lat *macula*, a spot, hole, mesh

marshal The original sense is 'horse servant' (not 'master of the horse') O F *mareschal*, O G *maraschal*, from *marah*, battle horse (cf *Ger Mare*, Engl *mare*) and Goth *shalks*, servant Cf *Ger Schalk*, rogue Hence the verb to *mar shal*, to arrange guests, troops, etc (II 101, etc)

mazer (v 798), maplewood bowl Icel *mosur bollr* Maple wood was so called because mottled In O G *mase*=spot (cf Lat *macula*), hence *Ger Mazer*=measles

- meed** (I 313), reward, guerdon, A S *med*, Ger *Miete*, rent, pay
mien (v 538, etc) air, deportment, look Fr *mine*, Ger *Miene*,
 Ital *mima*
- minstrel** (I 60) M E (Chaucer) *ministril*, as well as other
 forms, from low Lat *ministralis*, Lat *minister*, a servant
 'Applied to the lazy train of retainers who played instru-
 ments, acted as buffoons and jesters and the like' (Skeat)
- mood** (III 50) cognate with Ger *Mut*, state of mind, courage
 (The 'mood' meaning a musical strain is the Lat *modus*)
- oriel** (III 20) 'a recess with a window in a room' Skeat holds
 it to be the Lat *auriculum*, low Lat *orivolum*, i.e. the gilded
 chamber. Infirm monks were allowed to dine apart in the
orivolum
- palfrey** (IV 423, VI 317), a saddle horse, especially a lady's
 horse, through O F *palefreid* from low Lat *paraveredus*,
 a queer combination of Grk *παρά*, 'beside,' and *veredus*,
 'post horse,' lit. therefore 'an extra post horse' From this
 is also derived the Dutch *paard*, Ger *Pferd*, a horse
- pall**, from Lat *palla*, a cloak (often richly embroidered) The
 A S *paell* and M E *pal* are used for rich purple cloth (e.g.
 of an archbishop's scarf) The word is thus used in I 622
 and IV 589
- pallet** (IV 588), straw mattress, M E *paillet*, diminutive of Fr
paille, Lat *palea*, straw
- palmer** (v 115, VI 40) 'one who bears a palm branch in token
 of having been to the Holy Land' (Skeat) See Chaucer,
CT, 13
- pibroch** (IV 135, etc), from Gael *prob*, pipe, means lit 'the art
 of playing on the bagpipe', hence the 'music peculiar to the
 bagpipe' Used sometimes, wrongly, for the bagpipe itself
 (I 114)
- piked** (v 114), furnished with a spike, the *pike staff* was used by
 pilgrims *Pike*, *peak*, *beak*, *pique*, *spike*, are all forms of the
 same word
- pilgrim** (I 248), from Lat *peregrinus*, foreigner, Fr *pelerin*,
 Dutch *pelgrim*, etc Originally merely a 'stranger,'
 'traveller'
- plaid** (III 405, etc) Gael *plaid*=blanket probably contracted
 from *peal lard*, sheep skin, *peall* (cf Lat *pellis* and M E
fell), meaning a hide The original plaid was doubtless of
 skin
- plain**, used (IV 235) for *plaint* or *plaining* I know no other
 example Skeat says 'the verb to *plain* (Fr *plaindre*, from
 Lat *plangere*), to mourn, is perhaps obsolete' Shaks uses
 it 'the king hath cause to plain' (*R Lear*, III 1)

- pledge** (II 24 61, cf I 196, **impledge**), a security, assurance (toast), M E *plegge*, hostage, O F *plege*, surety, possibly from Lat *praebere*, to offer
- plight** (I 105, IV 364, etc) 'The proper sense is *peril*, hence a promise involving peril or risk a duty' (Skeat) The M E *pliht* is generally used as in the modern 'in evil plight' The Ger *Pflicht* has only the sense of *duty, obligation* Scott uses *plight* for *plighted*, as past tense (VI 144) and as past participle (III 575)
- port** (v 766), *haibou*, Lat *portus*, also (v 670) gate, Lat *porta* 'So let the ports be guarded,' Shaks *Cor* I 7
- portcullis** (I 589), 'a sliding door pointed with iron, let down to protect a gateway', from Lat *porta* and some low Lat word as *colaticus*, 'flowing, sliding,' formed from Lat *colare*, to strain (wine), whence the O F *porte coleice*
- rede** (III 31) advice *To read*, or *rede* (cf Ger *reden, raten, Ratsel*, etc), meant first to advise, then to explain or interpret (whence 'riddle,' cf I 117) and lastly to read
- requiem** (II 565) a mass for the repose of the dead, so called because the mass began with the words *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*, 'Rest eternal grant them, Lord' Cf 'Te Deum,' 'Habeas Corpus,' etc
- rood** (II 422, III 444), 'the same word as *rod*' (Skeat), but generally with the meaning of a measure of land (cf Ger *Rute*) or the Cross Cf *rood loft, Holyrood*, etc
- rosary** (IV 542) 'The *chapelet de roses* placed on the statues of the Virgin (shortly called a *rosaire*) came to mean a sort of chain, intended for counting prayers, made of threaded beads, which at first were made to resemble the chaplets of the Madonna' (Brachet) See also under *beadsman*
- rote** (III 484) 'Wel couthe he synge and pleyen on a rote' (Chaucer, *Prol*, 236) Cf Spenser, *FQ*, IV 9 6 Probably a kind of harp or fiddle The O F *rote* is found in the *Roman de la Rose* Evidently the Gael *crut*, Welsh *crwth*, a fiddle, found also in O G as *hrota*
- rule** (VI 34), from Lat *regula*, O F and A S *reule* (Chaucer, *Prol*, 173) originally a carpenter's rule, ruler, used much of the monastic orders, e g 'Rule of Anchorites,' etc
- russet** (I 3) reddish or reddish brown, diminutive of Fr *rousse* (fem of *roux*), from Lat *rustus* It is also used as noun 'a coarse brown rustic dress'
- scapulare** (VI 35), generally *scapulary*, a vestment for the head and shoulders, 'a kind of scarf worn by friars and others, so called from passing over the shoulders' (Skeat) Lat *scapulae*=shoulderblades It seems to have been substituted by St Benedict for the heavier cowl

- scathe** (II 210) harm, injury 'From a Teutonic base *skath*, to harm,' or wound Cf Ger *Schaden*
- scroll** (v 22), a roll of paper or parchment originally 'a shred,' from O F *escrouelle*, which seems from an old Dutch word *schroode*, a shred or strip
- scutcheon** (II 539) 'a painted shield,' heraldic shield O F *ecusson*, Ital *scudo*, Lat *scutum*
- sear** (I 32), also spelt *sere*, 'the sere the yellow leaf' (*Macbeth*), dry, parched, A S *sear* The idea (as in *scart*) is of being parched, seared, with heat Cf *sore* and Ger *versehren* Scott's 'sear and dry' is a tautology
- selcouth** (IV 314), lit 'seldom known,' i.e. strange Cf *uncouth*, (the Scotch *unco*) where *couth* is past participle of A S *cunnan*, to know Cf Spenser, *F Q*, VIII 14, 'But wondered much at his so selcouth case'
- selle** (III 566, VI 341), seat, especially seat on horseback, or saddle French word, from Lat *sella*
- seneschal** (I 633, II 90), steward 'The original signification must have been old (i.e. chief) servant, as the etymology is undoubtedly from the Gothic *sin*s, old and *salles*, a servant,' See *Marshal* With the Gothic *sin*s cf O G *sin* in *Sin-flut*, *Sin grun*, etc., where the sense is everlasting or universal Skeats compares Lat *sen ex*
- serf** (III 409) 'A late word' (Skeat) Fr *serf*, a thrall, from Lat *servus*
- sheen**, in IV 338, may be substantive, as in Byron's 'The sheen of their spears,' and *Hamlet*, III 2 167 But it is also used by Chaucer and Spenser as adjective A S *scēne* or *scyne*, fair, bright Germ *schon*
- shroud** (I 3) 'Had formerly the general sense of garment or covering' Perhaps nearly=*shred*, a piece of cloth cut off (root *shar*) In its sense as the 'dress,' or rigging, of a ship (III 488) perhaps rather Scandinavian or Icelandic (*skruð*)
- sooth** (I 306), truth A S *sōth* Said by Max Muller to be connected with Sanscrit *satya*, true It is still commonly used in *forsooth*, and *soothsayer*
- spangle** (I 493) The noun is diminutive from O E *spanq*, a buckle, clasp, stud Cf Ger *Spange*, metal ornament, metal plate, clasp Hence to *spangle* is to adorn with bright sparkling objects
- squire** (I 600), short form of *esquire*, shieldbearer, O F *escuyer*, from Lat *scutum*, shield Cf *scutcheon*, and notice the forms O F *escut*, modern Fr *ecu*, for 'shield'

stark (I 608) The original sense in English seems to have been 'stiff,' but Chaucer uses it for 'strong' In Ger *stark* (as in Dutch, Danish, etc.) the sense is rather 'strong', so that Ger *starken*, to starch, means to strengthen rather than to stiffen

stole (II 564), a long robe or scarf for a priest Lat *stola*, Grk *στολη*

sung instead of *sang*, as past tense Cf I 47, 447, II 518, etc

swarth (I 179) 'The proper form is *swart*' (used II 193) The root *swar* seems to contain the sense of scorching or blackening by heat The Norse god *Swtir*, i.e. 'Swart,' is the god of fire Cf Ger *Schwarz*

targe, or *target*, a circular shield, perhaps cognate with Ger *Zarge*, a rim In old Ger a 'shield rim' (*Schildes rand*) is common for a 'shield'

tartan (V 608, etc.) is said to be the Spanish word *tartaña*, a thin woollen cloth, FI *tirtame* or *tirtame* Its origin is unknown See on III 354

thane (II 296) is the A S *thegen*, O G *degen*, a young man, a warrior Hence used for 'chieftain' Possibly cognate with (Gk *τεκνον*, child

thrall (IV 192) not an A S word, but borrowed from Norse, probably originally 'a runner' (cf 'deacon' from *διακονος*)

tourney (IV 382), or *tournament* 'So named from the swift *turning* of the horses in the combat' (Skeat)

trews (III 405), a form of 'trousers' 'In older books the word appears without the latter *r*, in the forms *troozes*, *trouses*' (Skeat) Especially used of Irish and Scotch breeches From FI *trousses* lit 'bundles', probably from the idea of tucking or *trussing* up

trick (I 328), adorn Cf 'tricks his beams' (Milton, *Lycidas*, 170) Skeat takes it merely as a verb formed from the word *trick*, 'clever contrivance,' a 'toy' Cf Shaks *Tam Shrew*, IV 3 'A knack, a toy, a trick'

trill means (1) to shake, quaver, from Ital *trillare*, (2) to roll quickly round, 'perhaps obsolete, but once common', (3) to tickle, Spenser *FQ*, II 12 78, Shaks *Lea*, IV 3 In the last two senses it seems to be of Scandinavian origin

truncheon (VI 22, 558), cudgel, baton from Lat *truncus* diminutive from FI *trunc*

vaward (VI 236), another form of the *vanward*, i.e. *avant garde*, of an army *Guard* and *ward* are the French and English forms of the same word A S *weard*, a watching, a fem noun, like Ger *die Warte*

veil (I 284) better spelt *vail*, to lower 'Vailing her high top lower than the sands' (*Merch Ven*, 11) In this sense has nothing to do with *veil*, Lat *velum*, but from O F *avaller*, to lower, lit to bring down to the valley In mod Fr *avalier* means generally to bring down in the sense of *swallowing*, but *aval* and *amont*, down and up (of streams and roads), are used, and *avalier*, 'to go down stream' is also not uncommon, though Skeat ignores it Originally from Lat *ad vallem* Cf *avalanche*

viol (III 484), 2 (large) violin, said to be from low Lat *vitula* (*Fiddle*, Ger *Freidel*, is the Teutonic form) Diez derives it from Lat *vitulari*, to keep a holiday, and Skeat believes this to really mean 'to sacrifice a calf' (*vitulus*) If so, then *fiddle*, *viol*, and *viol* are closely related

vouch (I 153), to attest, affirm strongly O F *voucher* Probably a Norman French expression Origin Lat *vocare*, to call

ward (I 596, III 123) A watch, guard See under *ward* In v 751 used of a part of a fortress held by a guard, or forming one ring in the defences Cf 'The first and the second ward,' *Acts*, xii, 10 The old Scotch castles do not seem to have been built in concentric 'wards' In vi 201 a *ward* is a 'minor'—one under a guardian

wassail (I 376, 424) 'a festive occasion, a merry carouse' From A S *waes hael*, lit *be hale*, i.e. 'good health to thee' 'The story is well known that Rowena presented a cup to Voltegern with the words *waes hael*' (Skeat) By the way *carouse* has also an interesting derivation, viz the Ger *gar aus*, 'quite out,' i.e. the bumper is quite finished Hence to *garouse*, or *carouse*

welter (IV 253), to roll round Cf Ger *wolzen* (whence our 'waltz') In modern English generally of rolling in soft or liquid substances, blood, mud, etc

wicket (I 590), a little gate or door, Fr *quichet* Probably the idea is that of a small light door *easily turned* Cf 'turn stile' and Ger *weichen*, to yield and Icelandic *veigja*, to veer or turn (The wicket in cricket is so named as being like a little gate)

wight (vi 315, 625) as an adjective means 'nimble, active, strong' A Scandinavian word from a Teutonic root *wih* or *wig*, to fight In O G (*Nibelungenlied*) we have *wigant*, a warrior Cognate with Lat *vincere*, *vigor* (The other *wight*, a person, a being, A S *wiht*, Ger *Wicht*, is from a different root The neuter is found in 'not a whit')

wilder (I 406, 515), short form of *be-wilder*, which, according to Skeat, should be *be-waldern*, i.e. to lead into a *wilderne* (modern *wilderness*, which should be *wildern ness*)

wind to blow The word *wind* (i.e. in motion) is from an Aryan root *ua* or *aw*, to blow (Grk *ἀνέμι*, Lat *ventus*, Ger *wehen*, *Wind*, etc.) The verb to *wind*, i.e. to twist round, is from quite another root (Teut *wand*, Ger *winden*, etc.) The past tense of to *wind* (i. horn) should be *winded* (as in iv 469) not *wound* (as in i 33, 505). But *wound* is common in this sense.

wold (i 360, 553), 'a down, a plain open country'. A S *weald*. The original meaning of Ger *Wald* (now 'forest') was probably 'preserve', 'hunting ground'. The *Odenwald* for instance was the hunting ground of Odin, and probably never entirely forest.

wroke (iii 714) past participle of *weak* (iii 36), which was formerly a strong verb with past tense *wrak*, and past participle *wrole* or *wroken* (*Piers the Plowman*). It thus corresponds exactly with the Ger *rachen* (to revenge), which is now a weak verb making *rachte*, *geracht*, but one finds also *gerochen* in poetry.

yeoman (i 600) in England means a 'gentleman farmer'. The word in O E is *ȝeman* or *yoman*. It may possibly be the old Frisian *gāman* 'villager', or rather 'man of a *gā* (Ger *Gau*, district, possibly cognate with Grk *γαῖα*, earth).

yore (i 37) is the A S *geara*, which is genitive plural of *gear*, a year. The exact meaning is therefore 'of years,' i.e. in years past.

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